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ABSTRACT

This paper evaluates the effect of Federal resettlement policy on Southeast Asian refugee women's employment training programs and describes the extent to which this training contributed to the refugees' economic mobility and acculturation. The report is divided into three major sections. Part 1 introduces the study by discussing its background, purpose and conceptual framework, and data collection methods. Data were derived from a survey of key refugee leaders and resettlement personnel, a pilot study conducted in St. Paul and Minneapolis (Minnesota) (cities with large refugee populations and extensive employment training programs), and a concentrated study of nine additional sites concerning Federal resettlement policy on educational assistance to refugees. Part 2 presents an historical overview of public policy and refugee training from 1975 to 1985. Part 3 describes existing programs providing preemployment training and training for a number of different industries. The study's principal finding is that Federal employment training policy resulted in the training of large numbers of refugees for the secondary labor market. Once entering that market, however, frequent layoffs and low pay caused refugees to move back and forth between jobs and welfare. Most women's training focused on preparation for jobs in industrial sewing, electronics assembly, or the cleaning industry--all jobs involving the lowest skills and the lowest pay. Nevertheless, training programs appear to have helped refugee women acquire confidence and adapt to their new environment by providing a supportive atmosphere. (KH)

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TRAINING SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEE WOMEN FOR EMPLOYMENT: PUBLIC POLICIES AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS, 1975-85

Sarah R. Mason

Southeast Asian Refugee Studies

Occasional Papers

Number Four

Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEE STUDIES

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Hmong bilingual assistant Mai Vang (right) helps Mach Neang, a Cambodian refugee, master sewing techniques in an alterations and tailoring course at St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute. Sewing is the second largest occupational group for Southeast Asian refugee women.
(photo by Wing Young Huie)

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PREFACE

This study is an outgrowth of observations made during my work as a member of the research team for The Hmong Resettlement Study (Reder 1984), commissioned by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement. While conducting fieldwork in 1982 and 1983, I began to realize that most refugee assistance programs provided very limited training for women, and that the training provided was generally restricted to traditionally sex-segregated occupations such as industrial sewing and housekeeping. The jobs for which the refugee women were trained were low-skilled, low-paid, and unstable, and offered little potential for advancement. While refugee men were in many cases also trained for low-paid and unstable work, the range of occupations for which women were trained was much narrower. As a result the jobs acquired by refugee women were generally the lowest-paid and must unstable in the labor market.

In 1983, I conducted a preliminary study of employment training programs for Hmong women in St. Paul and Minneapolis, and presented my findings in a paper delivered at the second Hmong Research Conference at the University of Minnesota in November 1983. Because of lack of funding I was unable to employ translators for interviews with participants or to gather data on federal refugee training policy for the preliminary study.

The present study was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, supplemented by support from the Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota. My thanks are due to Mary M. Kritz, the project officer at the Rockefeller Foundation, and Thomas M. Scott, director of CURA.

A great debt of gratitude is owed to the ninety-two refugee women I interviewed (listed in Appendix B), who provided invaluable information on their experience in employment training programs as well as on their broader resettlement experience. Many of these interviews could never have been carried out without the able assistance of the project translators, Sy Vang, Chu Xiong, Savannikoni Voungsaga, Vibol Thong, Mai Kue, Duong Chan, and Voun Thann.

The cooperation and insights of the staff of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, state refugee coordinators, representatives of voluntary agencies, program administrators, and teachers also contributed a great deal to the project.

The author is especially indebted to Barbara M. Posadas, Marilyn B. Young, and Leigh Bristol-Kagan for their supportiveness throughout the project. A special thanks is due to the latter for reading the manuscript and providing very astute criticism.

Bruce T. Downing and Glenn L. Hendricks, of the Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project, also read the manuscript and provided useful criticism that has improved the study a great deal. However, the interpretation of the data and any errors are solely the responsibility of the author.

The encouragement and editorial skills of Judith H. Weir and Ruth E. Hammond enabled the author to overcome the many difficulties of doing research on a topic which, up until this point, has been left largely unexplored. They also brought consistency and clarity to the study.

The patience of typists Chris McKee and Louise Duncan through numerous revisions of the manuscript was particularly appreciated. And thanks are also due to Shirley Bennett for her efficiency in handling the financial aspects of the project.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

During the decade extending from 1975 to 1985, a broad network of programs was established to serve the Southeast Asian refugees who had resettled in cities and towns throughout the United States. These programs included English language and employment training, and cross-cultural orientation; their purpose was to assist the refugees in the process of integrating into the mainstream of American society, including entering the labor force. Most of the programs were funded at least partially by federal educational assistance for refugees, initially authorized by Congress for Cuban refugees in the early 1960s.

Refugee employment training programs, the focus of the present study, were for the most part designed and administered by social agencies, educational institutions, or refugee mutual assistance associations in keeping with their own social and educational goals. However, federal guidelines based on resettlement policy also played an important part in determining the scope and content of the training, and in designating training priorities.

This study is concerned with the impact of federal resettlement policy on refugee employment training programs, particularly those serving refugee women. The underlying assumption of the study is that refugee programs should provide equitable training opportunities for women and men, in terms of funding, accessibility, quality of instruction, and choice of occupational fields.

The principal questions addressed in the study are the following: What impact did these employment training programs have on Southeast Asian refugee resettlement in the United States? What percent of the refugees participated in training? Did Southeast Asian refugees with training achieve economic mobility more readily than those without training? Did the training programs serve refugee women equitably? What effect did federal resettlement policy have on the equity and effectiveness of employment training programs for refugees in general, and for refugee women in particular?

Since the withdrawal of American forces from Southeast Asia in 1975, approximately 800,000 refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia have arrived in the United States. Of this number, approximately 448,000 (56 percent) are males, and 352,000 (44 percent) are females. The median age of the refugee population is 23.9 years, with no significant age difference between males and females. About 432,000 (54 percent) are adults between the ages of 18 and 44, the principal years of employment among refugees. Of these, 241,920 are men and 190,080 are women (Office of Refugee Resettlement [ORR] 1986b).

Southeast Asian refugees who arrived in the United States from 1975 through 1978 were largely urban Vietnamese, including professionals, civil servants, military officers, businessmen and businesswomen, and their families. Numbering approximately 170,700, these early arrivals generally had a high level of education, and most were able to find stable employment within three years. While some were able to retain their professional or managerial status through retraining, a larger number became skilled blue collar workers by taking advantage of vocational training provided by the federal resettlement program (Marsh 1980, 13-19).

A second wave of refugees arrived after 1978 from both the rural and urban areas of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. This group included shopkeepers, soldiers, farmers, and fishermen, and their families, all of them having far less education and fewer transferable skills than their predecessors. This group also had less access to employment training after its arrival in the

United States, and had considerably more difficulty in entering the work force. By late 1982, when the total number of refugees reached 619,834, this group represented the majority of the refugee population (Marsh 1980, 18-19; ORR 1978, 24; ORR 1983a, 33).

RELATED STUDIES

While research on refugee employment training is very limited, two recent survey studies on the economic status of the refugees and their use of resettlement programs provide useful data for the present study. Robert L. Bach's study, _Labor Force Participation and Employment of Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States_ (1984), indicates that by the early 1980s the economic position of the refugees was comparable to that of minority groups and recent immigrants in terms of labor force participation rates,* unemployment levels,** wage levels and stability of work. Bach uses data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Annual Survey of Refugees*** to show that the labor force participation in October 1983 was 55 percent for refugees compared to 64.1 percent for the United States working age population, a difference of 9.1 percentage points. He also shows that during the same month the refugees had an unemployment rate of 18 percent compared to 8.2 percent for the general population, a difference of 9.8 percentage points. Moreover, during the 1982 recession the unemployment rate for refugees rose to a high of 24.1 percent compared to 9.9 percent for the United States population, a difference of 14.2 percentage points (Bach 1984, 6).

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*Labor force participation rates represent those employed or job hunting.
**Unemployment rates represent those looking for a job who cannot find one.
***The Annual Survey of Refugees is conducted by Opportunity Systems, Inc., for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Most important for the present study, Bach's data show that refugee women are at an even greater disadvantage than the men. While Bach does not provide unemployment rates for women, he indicates that labor force participation rates in 1983 averaged 42 percent for refugee women compared to 58 percent for refugee men, a difference of 16 percentage points. Even when background factors such as educational level and English proficiency were taken into account, the women still had a 10-percentage-point lower probability of participating in the labor force (Bach 1984, 17, 20, 21).

Bach's study also indicates that while Southeast Asian refugees, like other minorities and recent immigrants, have been employed in a wide range of industries, they are generally employed at the lowest levels of those industries, in low-paid, low-skilled jobs that afford little job stability and few opportunities for advancement. Data from the annual survey show that in 1983 the three occupations most frequently chosen by Southeast Asian refugees were electrical and electronics assembly (6.4 percent of all employed refugees), janitorial and cleaning work (5.8 percent), and work as textile sewing machine operators (4.3 percent) (Bach 1984, 79, 82-84). Particularly noteworthy for the present study is the fact that the third largest percentage of all working refugees--over 4 percent--were employed as sewing machine operators in the garment industry, an industry that hires mostly women. This will be treated in more detail in part 3.

In another survey study, the Southeast Asian Refugee Self-Sufficiency Study, Nathan Caplan, John K. Whitmore, and Quang L. Bui (1985) corroborate Bach's findings on the economic status of refugee men and women. However, data from the former were based on late 1982 interviews with selected "respondents" from approximately 1,400 households of Vietnamese, ethnic Chinese (from Vietnam), and lowland Lao refugees who arrived in the United States after October 1978. These data indicate only a 44 percent labor force participation rate and a 44 percent unemployment rate for this group. These data also show that only 7 percent of the 4,160 adults in the sample were enrolled in vocational training programs in 1982. Those enrolled represented 9 percent of the men and only 3 percent of the women. Approximately 15 percent of the adults had been enrolled in vocational training programs in the past. This represented 18 percent of the men and only 6 percent of the women. Data from this study also show that those with little education and those who had low-skilled jobs in Southeast Asia were the least likely to receive any resettlement services, and this was particularly true of vocational training (Caplan, Whitmore, and Bui 1985, 9, 95, 99, 100, 109, 242). This data is particularly relevant to the present study because it provides clear evidence of the inequity of training opportunities for refugee women, particularly for the large number who had little prior education in Southeast Asia.

The Southeast Asian Refugee Self-Sufficiency Study had an important impact on federal policy on refugee training because of two of its other findings. First, data from this study show that in 1982 refugees who had vocational training were more likely to be employed and tended to have more stable jobs with better pay. Second, the data also show that the most important factor in household self-sufficiency was the addition of a second wage earner. While the study was not published until 1985, these findings were known to ORR in 1982. Despite continued opposition to training by some officials, the year 1983 represented a turning point in the availability of training opportunities for refugees with low education and skills levels. A program for women, older men, and youth, known as the Secondary Wage Earners Program, was a direct outgrowth of these findings and will be described in part 3 (ORR 1984a, 80-81; ORR 1984b, 4).

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the present study is to evaluate the effect of federal policy on refugee women's employment training programs as an integral part of the larger network of refugee training projects, and to determine the extent to which this training contributed to the refugees' economic mobility. A second purpose is to examine the experience of women who took part in employment training programs, in order to determine whether these programs affected refugee women in aspects of resettlement other than employment, such as acculturation and socialization.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The perspective of the dual labor market theory* has been particularly useful as an analytical tool in evaluating the effect of federal policy on refugee training programs. This theory, which grew out of economists' studies of urban labor markets during the late 1970s and early 1980s, suggests that a dichotomization of the American labor market due to technological changes and increased competition in certain industries has resulted in two separate economic sectors: a "primary" market and a "secondary" market. Jobs in the primary market tend to be high-skilled, high-paid, and stable, with well-established channels for advancement. Jobs in the secondary market tend to be low-skilled, low-paid, and intermittent, seasonal, or part-time, with little potential for advancement regardless of a worker's diligence. Secondary market jobs are generally found in highly competitive, labor-intensive industries that maximize their profits by cutting labor costs. These jobs are usually held by minorities, women, and teenagers.

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*For a more detailed explanation of the dual market theory, see David M. Gordon, Theories of Poverty and Underemployment (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1972), 43-52.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Data collection for the present study indicates that federal employment training policy resulted in the training of large numbers of refugee women and men for the secondary labor market in order to get them off public assistance rolls. This policy generally failed to accomplish its purpose because of the nature of the secondary market. Frequent layoffs and low pay caused refugees to move back and forth between jobs and welfare.

Within the secondary labor market, moreover, sex-segregated occupations for which most refugee women were trained were generally the lowest skilled, lowest paid, and most unstable of refugee occupations.

Most refugee women's employment training focused on preparation for a narrow range of secondary labor market jobs in industrial sewing, electronics assembly, or the cleaning industry, resulting in limited economic mobility. The only field of training that enabled refugee women to enter the primary market was health care training. This training was provided only to a small number of refugees.

On the other hand, training programs appear to have played a significant role in refugee women's adaptation to their new environment by providing a supportive atmosphere in which they developed a degree of self-confidence.

METHOD

The method for this study included, first, the utilization of a mailed questionnaire to generate data on employment training programs for Southeast Asian refugee women. The questionnaires were sent to key refugee leaders and resettlement personnel in every state with a refugee population of more than 200. Responses to the questionnaire (33.6 percent) provided preliminary information on the extent of training programs for refugee women in various regions of the United States as well as data on specific programs, including dates and locations of programs, sponsoring agencies, clientele, staff, type of training provided, supportive services (i.e., child care and transportation), and funding sources.

Second, a pilot study was conducted in St. Paul and Minneapolis, a metropolitan area with a large refugee population (26,000) and extensive employment training programs for refugee women.

Third, nine additional sites were selected for concentrated study on the basis of data from questionnaire responses and other sources. The main objective of the selection process was to achieve the broadest possible view of employment training for refugee women, within the limits of the time and resources available for the project. The specific criteria for the final choices included (1) representation of the major regions of Southeast Asian refugee resettlement, including the East and West Coasts, the Midwest, and the South (while taking into account the fact that more training programs have been initiated in some regions than in others); (2) representation of large cities, small cities and towns, suburban areas, and counties that form a single unit in terms of refugee resettlement; and (3) representation of the main cultural groups in the Southeast Asian refugee population.

At each of the main study sites the investigator collected data on the refugee population and the population at large; observed employment training programs; and conducted interviews with state resettlement authorities, teachers, and administrators. Ninety-two refugee women participating in training programs were interviewed; interpreters were used when necessary. An effort was made to collect information on both past and current programs.

In addition to data collection at the main study sites, several side trips were made to observe particularly innovative programs, or to observe areas lacking programs (for comparative purposes).

The ten main study sites were the following: St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota; Washington, D.C., and suburban Arlington, Virginia; Providence, Rhode Island; Milwaukee and Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Chicago and Elgin, Illinois; Greensboro, North Carolina; Marion, North Carolina; Orange County, California; Portland and Salem, Oregon; and Seattle and Tacoma, Washington. Side trips included visits to the following additional locations: the Bronx, New York; Rockford, Illinois; Charlotte, North Carolina; Spartanburg, South Carolina; Oakland, Berkeley, and Stockton, California; and Fargo, North Dakota. During an earlier research project the investigator collected data on refugee women and resettlement programs in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in Texas, and this data also provided valuable insights for the present study.

Finally, documents concerning federal resettlement policy on educational assistance to refugees were obtained from congressional offices and libraries, the Congressional Research Service, the General Accounting Office, the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and state refugee program offices. Additional information on policy was collected through interviews with ORR staff, State Department officials, Senate and House Judiciary Committee counsel, state refugee coordinators, and county resettlement administrators.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Several terms should be defined as they will be used in this study. The term "employment training" includes any training program that contributes directly to the refugee's preparation for employment, including skills training, work orientation, or training in business or cooperative management. The term "preemployment training" is used to indicate training that prepares the refugee for employment training. The term "vocational training" is used to designate courses offered by a vocational institute, and includes both "refugee specific" and "mainstream" classes.

The term "employment training for refugee women" is used to describe programs that are either specifically designed for refugee women or include a significant number of refugee women.

PART II

PUBLIC POLICY AND REFUGEE TRAINING

Although no statement of broad policy goals has been developed in more than a decade of Southeast Asian refugee resettlement, specific objectives enunciated in the Refugee Act of 1980 and views expressed in congressional hearings on resettlement issues reveal the underlying rationale for United States refugee policy. On the one hand, the 1980 act expresses humanitarian concern for providing assistance to the victims of oppression. On the other hand, assistance programs are harnessed to the foreign and domestic policies of the United States government.*

In the introductory statement of the 1980 act--initially drafted by Carter administration officials in consultation with members of Congress--the authors defined the purpose of the act as, first, the provision of a "permanent and systematic procedure for the admission to this country of refugees of special humanitarian concern," and, second, the provision of an "effective resettlement and absorption of those refugees who are admitted" (U.S. Congress 1980).

During 1979 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, Ambassador Dick Clark, first coordinator of refugee affairs, addressed the first objective when he testified that refugee programs were "an important element in our foreign policy." Clark pointed out, first, that by accepting refugees for resettlement, the United States was assisting friendly governments in

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*Material in this paragraph and the three that follow was used in slightly different form in an earlier study by the author, "Kinship, Community, and the Welfare State: Public Policy and Hmong Families in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota," in Public Policy and the American Family: Issues for the 1980s, edited by Katherine A. Benson and Roland S. Guyotte, forthcoming.

Southeast Asia that were under political and economic strain from the large numbers of refugees arriving in their respective countries. Second, Clark observed that by offering help to those fleeing Communism, the United States reinforced its image as a "nation of leadership and humanitarian concern." Finally, Clark pointed to the fact that United States aid to these refugees offered a "beacon of hope to people fleeing persecution and repression in eastern Europe, and figures in our relations with the Soviet Union" (U.S. Congress 1979, 9).

The second objective of the Refugee Act of 1980, defined as the "effective resettlement and absorption" of the refugees, was also addressed during the 1979 hearings. While most members of the Senate Judiciary Committee voiced concern for providing assistance to the refugees after their arrival, many also expressed views reflecting their concern with maintaining social and economic stability in areas of resettlement. The committee invited leaders of the black community and the AFL-CIO to make statements regarding racial tensions and competition for employment that might result from the influx of refugees. Although these leaders testified that black Americans and the American labor movement strongly supported Southeast Asian refugee resettlement, members of Congress and welfare officials present at the hearings expressed serious misgivings regarding the cost of resettlement, the possibility of long-term welfare dependency, and the social and economic impact of large numbers of refugees on American society (U.S. Congress 1979, 25-35, 41-42, 178-179).

Federal educational assistance for refugees was initially provided for Cuban refugees who arrived in the United States following Fidel Castro's rise to power in 1959. The Cuban Refugee Program, authorized by the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, provided for cash and medical assistance, as well as educational benefits, with no time limits on eligibility. The

Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 extended these benefits to Southeast Asian refugees but limited eligibility to thirty-six months (reduced to eighteen months in 1982). Various programs during the 1970s also provided assistance to Soviet and other refugees. The Refugee Act of 1980 provided permanent, comprehensive refugee legislation for the first time (U.S. Congress 1962; U.S. Congress 1975; U.S. Congress 1980).

The Refugee Act of 1980 also established the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to administer programs for all refugees admitted to the United States. Most important for the present study, the 1980 act provided for uniform educational assistance, including English language and employment training, and specifically called for equal educational opportunities for refugee women (U.S. Congress 1980).

POLICY AND TRAINING IN THE EARLY YEARS, 1975-80

Federally funded English language and employment training programs for Southeast Asian refugees were initiated soon after the refugees began to arrive in the United States. Funds provided by the Indochinese Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 were made available by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW)* for five pilot training sites in areas with large numbers of refugees. The sites included Arlington County, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C.; the state of Minnesota; and the city of Santa Ana, in Orange County, California (Schuman 1984).

These programs operated under the guidelines of HEW, the federal agency that administers the American public welfare system, an important component of domestic policy. In Arlington County, teachers and administrators at the

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* Since 1980 this has become the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Indochinese Cooperative Educational Program--established to provide employment training for the new arrivals--were instructed to require refugees to sign a statement before they entered classes, saying that they would take any job offered to them. HEW guidelines also called for targeting employable adults who were the primary wage earners of the household. An HEW official emphasized to the staff that the only goal of the program was immediate employment, and any English taught would have to be directly related to that goal. Refugees were given six months within which to get a job (Schuman 1986).

Most of the courses offered in the program were male-oriented courses in areas such as auto mechanics, welding, and home appliance repair, and therefore few women enrolled in the programs. Many women were also discouraged from enrolling because they had young children to care for and could not commit themselves to accepting any job offered (Schuman 1986).

Early federally funded programs for training refugees in the state of Minnesota were subject to similar guidelines, and very few women received training (Ball 1977, 2). In Orange County, California, researchers for the Equity Policy Center in Washington, D.C., found that the only training program for women was a course called the "Supplemental Wage Earner Program," which included six months of English language training but no skills training. When the researchers suggested the possibility of adapting one of Orange County's five federally funded vocational training programs to the needs of refugee women, the program directors informed them that this was specifically ruled out because the program targeted "primary breadwinners" in order to reduce the welfare case load (Equity Policy Center 1980).

In 1979 a study of Southeast Asian refugee programs conducted by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) pointed to the need for more English language study and employment training programs for refugees in the United States. The

GAO evaluators called for more programs for refugees who had had little formal education, and specifically for programs accessible to women with young children (GAO 1979, 88-89).

In 1977 a group known as the National Coalition of Refugee Resettlement began a series of dialogues with members of Congress that eventually resulted in the Refugee Act of 1980, whose provisions stood in contrast to the restrictive policies reflected in the HEW guidelines. The coalition--comprising individuals from state and local governments and voluntary agencies involved in resettlement--was initiated by Minnesota's first refugee coordinator of refugee resettlement, Stanley Breen. Many coalition members testified during the 1979 congressional hearing that preceded the enactment of the 1980 act, contributing to the act's liberal tone. Several women, including Joyce Schuman, director of Arlington County's Cooperative Education Program (later renamed the Refugee Education and Employment Program), and Congresswoman Elizabeth Holzman, also played important roles in determining the final form of the act by testifying on behalf of equal training opportunities for women (Silverman 1986; Kretzmann 1986).

A NEW ADMINISTRATION AND A NEW SOCIAL POLICY, 1981-82

With the assumption of political leadership by the Reagan administration in 1981, federal funding for domestic programs--including refugee educational assistance programs--was sharply reduced. Appropriations for refugee social services, which include English language and employment training, were reduced on the national level from $82.5 million in 1981 to $64.6 million in 1982. During the same period, the total refugee population grew from nearly 550,000 in 1981 to nearly 620,000 in 1982 (see table 1) (ORR 1982a, 6, 27; ORR 1983a, 5, 33).

Table 1

Refugee Social Services Funding and

Refugee Population, 1981-82

	United States		Minnesota	
	Social Services (in millions)	Population	Social Services (in millions)	Population
1981	$82.5	550,000	$4.7	21,500
1982	64.6	620,000	2.7	26,000

SOURCES: ORR Reports to Congress, 31 January 1982, 31 January 1983; Minnesota Refugee Program Office, 31 March 1981, 9 December 1985.

The effect of these cuts on states with rapidly growing refugee populations was devastating, as illustrated by the case of Minnesota. Refugee social services funding for the state dropped from $4.7 million in 1981 to $2.7 million in 1982. During the same period the refugee population in the state grew from 21,500 to 26,000 (see table 1).

A new GAO study of resettlement programs also reflected the changed political climate. The study, conducted in 1981 and 1982 (but not published until 1983), produced findings quite different from those of an earlier study completed by the same agency during the Carter administration in 1979. Contrary to its earlier recommendations that more refugee training programs should be provided, GAO evaluators in 1982 concluded that English language and employment training programs were not essential for refugee employment and served to prolong welfare dependency (GAO 1983, 28).

During the April 1982 congressional hearings on reauthorization of the Refugee Act of 1980, GAO evaluators presented their new findings and made a number of related recommendations for amending the 1980 act, all of which were designed to reduce welfare case loads and decrease spending on resettlement programs. These recommendations included (1) the amendment of the 1980 act to require greater emphasis by resettlement workers on the immediate employment of refugees after their arrival in the United States; (2) the repeal of the sixty-day work exemption for refugees immediately after arrival (generally a time for resolving medical problems and attending English language and employment training classes); (3) the use of sanctions on refugees who refused job offers deemed appropriate by resettlement authorities; and (4) the scheduling of English language and employment training only on a part-time basis in nonworking hours to avoid interference with the refugees' full-time employment (GAO 1983, 32-33).

Virtually all the recommendations of the GAO evaluators were enacted into the Refugee Assistance Amendments of 1982 and were incorporated into directives circulated by ORR to state refugee coordinators in August and October (GAO 1983, 22-23; U.S. Congress 1982b; ORR 1982c; ORR 1984d). The new guidelines contained in these documents, as well as the greatly reduced social services funds provided to state refugee programs, represented a resettlement policy that differed considerably from the liberal provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980. The new policy the guidelines represented served to restrict most refugees to jobs in the secondary labor market requiring little or no training. This was particularly true for women, who had less opportunity to participate in training programs after working hours due to the pressures of household and child care duties.

On 1 March 1983, nearly a year after presenting its testimony at the 1982 congressional hearings, the GAO published its second report on resettlement programs, entitled Greater Emphasis on Early Employment and Better Monitoring Needed in Indochinese Refugee Resettlement Program. Although the findings of the second GAO report had been known throughout the resettlement community since the 1982 hearings, an angry outburst of criticism was voiced by resettlement workers and officials when the report became available. The entire 25 March 1983 issue of Refugee Reports, a newsletter published by the American Council of Nationalities Services in Washington, D.C., was devoted to the flood of critical comments received by the editors. These ranged from accusations that GAO investigators reported false information, to claims that the study was politically motivated and reflected GAO's "negative bias against resettlement" (GAO 1983).

The anger expressed by resettlement workers, state coordinators, county officials, and voluntary agency personnel reflected their frustration with the new restrictions and resettlement crises that began in late 1981 and continued through 1982. It also reflected the growing tension between federal federal policymakers and state refugee administrators.

POLICY CHANGES AND CRISES IN THE RESETTLEMENT COMMUNITY, 1981-82

As noted in part 1, the 1982 recession affected refugee unemployment rates far more adversely than those of the general population. While training programs were limited in the initial years of resettlement, by the late 1970s more programs were available and the proportion of refugees receiving training began to increase. The large number of refugees who arrived between 1979 and 1982, however, were less likely to receive training due to increased demands on existing programs, cuts in social services that began in 1981, and new restrictions on English language and employment training imposed by ORR in 1982. In areas of high unemployment these refugees had little chance of competing successfully in the depressed labor market, and many began to move from state to state in search of employment (Powell 1985; Kretzmann 1982; Bassett-Smith 1985b).

In the spring of 1982, as refugee unemployment grew to crisis proportions, the ORR limited eligibility for refugee cash and medical assistance to eighteen months, a reduction of 50 percent from the thirty-six-month limit imposed a year earlier. The eighteen-month rule resulted in the removal of thousands of refugees from public assistance rolls throughout the country. While no nationwide count of refugees who lost benefits is available from ORR, in the state of Oregon alone, 11,000 refugees were dropped from public assistance within the fourteen-month period after the rule became effective in the spring of 1982 (ORR 1982b; ORR 1981b; Burns 1982; Chow 1982; Bassett-Smith 1985a).

Turmoil and anxiety in the refugee population, and crises in state refugee programs due to the loss of training programs and the announcement of the eighteen-month rule, were major factors in the large-scale migration of refugees that began in 1981 and reached a peak in 1982. The Hmong and other tribal groups from the highlands of Laos--the most disadvantaged in education and work skills--constituted the largest number of those migrating from one state or county to another. Most of the out-migration was from areas with depressed economies and no provision for public assistance for two-parent families (most refugees who lost benefits were intact families). Receiving states and counties were those with already large refugee populations--as many families moved in with relatives to combine resources--or those perceived as having jobs or public assistance still available. Thousands of refugees moved to Fresno and Merced counties in the Central Valley of California in hopes of finding farm work (ORR 1983c, 344; Reder et al. 1984, 2-4).

Congressional hearings held in April 1982 for the reauthorization of the 1980 Refugee Act became a forum for criticism of the eighteen-month rule. Of sixteen state and county officials who testified at the hearings, all but three strongly protested the policy change (state refugee coordinators from Texas and Louisiana concurred with the new rule, and the coordinator from Michigan did not address the issue). Most spoke of the chaos and despair already devastating the refugee communities in their states due to recent federal policy changes. They also pointed to increased state costs that resulted from these policy changes, charging that the new policy represented an effort by the federal government to shift responsibility for resettlement costs to the states (U.S. Congress 1982a, 343, 127-260, 340-362).

Criticism of the eighteen-month rule was voiced again during reauthorization hearings in June 1983. On 9 June, the first day of the hearings, ORR Director Phillip N. Hawkes reported that the eighteen-month regulation had resulted in a reduction of dependency by more than ten percentage points. In response to a question by Congressman Dan Lungren of California about what happened to the refugees who lost benefits, Hawkes indicated that he did not have any specific information on them. "Many went to work. Some disappeared; we do not know what they did. Some moved," he said (U.S. Congress 1983, 138, 174).

Several state refugee coordinators, on the other hand, presented results of follow-up studies by independent researchers concerning the refugees who lost benefits in their states. Liz Begert Dunbar, refugee coordinator in the state of Washington, was sharply critical of the eighteen-month rule and questioned the motives of federal officials in effecting this policy change. She reported that 10,000 refugees (one-third of the total refugee population in the state) were cut off public assistance in June 1982, causing a severe crisis in the refugee community. Of those cut off, 18 percent moved out of state, half of them to California, where public assistance for unemployed parents was available. Forty percent of those who remained in Washington, where unemployment was very high in 1982, were still unemployed, many receiving no assistance beyond food stamps. Those who found work had only marginal, temporary jobs. Dunbar said that in Washington the eighteen-month rule clearly had not accomplished its stated purpose of increasing self-sufficiency (Dunbar 1983, 234-236).

Congressional reauthorization hearings in 1983 also served as a forum for hard-pressed county officials in newly impacted areas such as Merced and Fresno counties in California. An estimated 7,000 Southeast Asian refugees moved to Merced County over a period of eighteen months from early 1982 to June 1983. Clark Channing, the chief administrative officer of Merced County, stated in congressional testimony in June 1983 that the county faced an overwhelming burden on its public assistance funds due to the large number of unemployed refugees among the recent arrivals. He requested federal Targeted Assistance for impacted counties to provide English language and employment training programs that would enable the refugees to become self-sufficient. He noted that most of the new arrivals from other counties and states could not speak English and lacked marketable skills (U.S. Congress 1983, 221-224).

In addition to testifying in reauthorization hearings, distraught county officials in impacted areas also began to lobby members of Congress from their districts in an effort to obtain supplemental funding for school districts serving refugee children, and English language and employment training programs designed for adult refugees. Their lobbying efforts proved effective, and several members of Congress took up the cause of frustrated county officials in their home districts. Subsequently, Congress appropriated supplemental funding designated specifically for Targeted Assistance for impacted counties, beginning in 1983 and continuing through 1985. Ironically, this action by Congress put ORR in the position of administering the most extensive English language and employment training for refugees since resettlement began in 1975, despite the agency's policy of reducing social services (U.S. Congress 1983, 222; U.S. Congress 1985, 43-45, 54-55).

NEW FEDERAL REFUGEE TRAINING PROGRAMS, 1984-85

Impact Aid and Targeted Assistance

In 1982 ORR responded to political pressure from states affected by the large influx of Cuban and Haitian entrants by developing a program of Impact Aid. Under this program the federal government reimbursed impacted counties for entrant-related costs, including increased expenditures by public schools, hospitals, fire departments, and other community services. ORR requested a one-time appropriation from Congress for $20 million for this purpose. Based on initial estimates of costs already incurred, however, Congress appropriated $35 million (U.S. Congress 1982a, 122; Cichon 1985, 1).

Although ORR administrators hoped to end the program after 1982, by 1983 growing pressure from officials in other impacted counties made this virtually impossible. County and state officials maintained that local refugee-related problems were the result of federal foreign policy decisions in which they had no voice and therefore the federal government should take more responsibility in resolving these problems. Subsequently, a decision was made at ORR to change the name of the program from Impact Act to Targeted Assistance, and to restructure the program in order to gain more control over assistance funds. Instead of reimbursing counties for their expenditures, as in the case of the earlier program, ORR initiated a system of proposals and negotiations for grants to the affected counties, in keeping with the directives of the Refugee Act of 1980. The stated purpose of the Targeted Assistance Program (TAP) was to provide English language instruction, employment training, and employment services to promote self-sufficiency in impacted counties (ORR 1985a, 33; Cichon 1985, 1-2).

Soon after TAP was initiated, however, tension developed between ORR Director Phillip N. Hawkes, a Reagan administration appointee, and members of Congress representing impacted counties. Each year ORR attempted to reduce the appropriation for TAP, and each year Congress appropriated more than ORR requested. In 1983 ORR requested $35 million for TAP and Congress doubled this amount, appropriating $70 million. It later added $11 million more, for a total of $81 million. A part of this was diverted by ORR to other projects, leaving approximately $66 million to be awarded to twenty sites for aid to forty-four impacted counties. Most of these programs did not begin operations until 1984 (U.S. Congress 1985, 44, 102; Cichon 1985, 2).

In 1984 Congress initially made available a total of $81.5 million for TAP, but during deliberations decided to divert $4 million to refugee health screening because of pressing needs in that area. Approximately $77.5 million remained for TAP. By the end of the fiscal year, however, ORR had obligated only about $37.5 million, or about half the appropriation (ORR 1985a, 36).

In 1985 ORR requested no appropriation for TAP, but Congress made available $50 million. During congressional hearings the tension between Hawkes and members of Congress representing impacted counties was reflected in sharp questioning of the ORR director by Congressman Howard L. Berman of California. Berman challenged Hawkes on the issue of ORR's consistently long delays in allocating and releasing funding for TAP and asked if there were some other "agenda" in this policy that prevented carrying out the intent of Congress. He also charged that Hawkes deliberately attempted to make it appear that county officials had more money than they could spend on TAP projects by pointing to delayed use of funds and frequent requests for authorization for carry-overs into the next fiscal year. Congressman Berman pointed out that county officials claimed that most awards arrived in the third and fourth quarters of the fiscal year, leaving them without funds at the beginning of their program years. This made it necessary to request authorization for holdovers to the next fiscal year in order to collect the money they had already spent (U.S. Congress 1985, 44-45, 54-55; Cichon 1985, 2).

Congressman Berman specifically asked Hawkes for clarification on information indicating that he had decided to use only $11 million of the $50 million appropriation for TAP in 1985 and planned to make up the remaining amount with holdover money from 1984. Upon confirmation by Hawkes that this was in fact his intention, Berman asserted that this was clearly contrary to the intent of Congress as it was expressed in the report accompanying the continuing resolution under which resettlement programs were then operating. Subsequently this issue was settled in the courts, with the affected states bringing a class action against ORR and winning the case (U.S. Congress 1985, 44-45, 54-55; Munia 1985).

Despite the political controversy surrounding TAP from 1983 to 1985, the program provided employment training for thousands of Southeast Asian refugees who lacked adequate skills for employment. Interviews with refugee women for the present study indicate that TAP projects offered many of them their first opportunity for employment training.

TAP awarded grants to impacted counties in three cycles known as TAP 1, initiated in 1983; TAP 2, in 1984; and TAP 3, in 1985. Forty-four counties in twenty-two states received TAP grants in each of the three cycles. These counties were selected on the basis of the number and concentration of unemployed refugees and entrants (particularly those who arrived between 1979 and 1982), and the lack of work skills in the local refugee population. The purpose of the program was "the furtherance of refugee economic self-sufficiency by aiding refugees in finding and retaining jobs, increasing refugee employability potential, and/or enhancing refugee job market possibilities." Allowable activities included job development, job placement, business and employer incentives, technical assistance to small businesses, short-term job training, and on-the-job training. Applicants were also encouraged to adopt "creative approaches" (Cichon 1985, 4, 7, 9).

TAP 1 (the only cycle on which detailed information is available) provided an estimated 32,000 training and service slots for refugees in impacted counties. The four types of programs most frequently offered were vocational training, on-the-job training, employment services, and vocational English language instruction, in that order. A small number of economic development projects were also included. The Vietnamese were the predominant cultural group participating (17.1 percent), while Lowland Lao and Hmong together formed the second largest group (8.5 percent). Most important for the present study, 67 percent of the participants were men and only 33 percent were women (Cichon 1985, 7, 8, 10).

Highland Lao Initiative

In addition to TAP, several smaller national discretionary projects were initiated by ORR in 1983 and 1984, and implemented from late 1983 to 1985. These projects were funded primarily by refugee social services funds. Like TAP, most of the new national projects were developed in response to crises or specific problems in the resettlement community. However, increasing evidence from ORR-commissioned studies linking refugee self-sufficiency to support services also played a part in the development of new training opportunities (Gall 1985).

The Highland Lao Initiative (HLI) was developed in response to the crisis caused by the migration of thousands of Hmong refugees to the Central Valley of California in late 1981 and 1982. While TAP provided assistance to the impacted counties in California, HLI was designed to stem the tide of migration by providing increased training and employment services to Hmong communities outside California. Funding for the project totaled more than $3 million (ORR 1983d, 1-3; North et al. 1985, 27).

In 1982 ORR staff became increasingly concerned about Hmong and other hill-tribe refugees from the highlands of Laos. Information from the ORR-commissioned Hmong Resettlement Study and other sources indicated that this group--most of whose members had little formal education or exposure to Western culture prior to resettlement--was having serious difficulties in finding employment and adapting to American life. The Hmong people's large-scale migration to California was believed to be largely due to the loss of social services programs and public assistance benefits in the communities left behind, and to the hope of finding jobs or benefits in California (ORR 1983d, 1-2).

In early 1983 ORR decided to provide special funding for assistance to Hmong communities outside California and to extend this assistance to other highland refugees who had similar difficulties in adapting to American life. In February Hmong and Mien leaders met with resettlement authorities in Washington, D.C., to discuss the form this assistance might take. Most leaders requested more job training and placement services, as well as help in strengthening their mutual assistance associations (MAAs) as service providers (North et al. 1985, 22).

In April the Hmong/Highland Lao Workgroup--composed of ORR staff--was established to gather data, identify sites and special needs, develop a plan of action, and recommend allocations for the HLI. When data collection and consultations with local refugee leaders and state coordinators were completed, the workgroup reported that the main needs of the Hmong included medical insurance, English language and employment training, farming projects, business training, assistance in strengthening their MAAs, and access to low-cost day care. In an effort to act quickly, ORR bypassed the usual process of soliciting competitive grant proposals, as required by the Refugee Act of 1980. Instead, the workgroup reviewed the data on each highland refugee community and determined the sites to be funded, the size of the grants, and what kind of activity to support. Only subsequently were noncompetitive grant applications solicited. Following this they recommended an allocation of $2.9 million to be awarded in small grants for forty-eight one-year projects in twenty-four states, as well as several national activities (ORR 1983a, 2-8, 12).

While data on many of the HLI projects are very limited, an ORR-sponsored evaluation of the program provides some useful information. Of the thirty-two projects selected for study, twelve were implemented in late 1983, while most of the remaining twenty started between January and April 1984. Seven projects provided on-the-job training (OJT), and 71 refugees obtained jobs through this program. Most reported that they received very little training. Six projects provided vocational training programs, although many more requested funding for this type of training. While information on enrollments and placements for vocational training in HLI as a whole is not available, data on three of the six programs indicate that they ranged from an enrollment of 186 with 112 placements in the largest program, to an enrollment of 44 with 14 placements in a smaller program. The OJT placements cost an average of $1,547 per refugee, while vocational training placements averaged $1,398. No gender-specific data was provided in the evaluation (North et al. 1985, 29, 40, 51-52, 61-62; ORR 1983a, 13-14).

Despite the limited data on the project as a whole, it is evident from HLI site studies that refugee women were not equitably served in terms of funds spent on employment training. In virtually every program that included training, considerably more was spent on training designed primarily for men than on training for women. The most glaring example was a project that received $50,000, of which $40,709 (81.4 percent) was spent on business training for men. The remaining $9,291 (18.6 percent) was spent for a women's craft project from which the women earned a total of $3,200. It was not clear from the study whether the women received training in marketing or other small business management skills (ORR 1984a; North et al. 1985, 67). If the ORR had provided more adequately for technical assistance to local refugee leaders, the result might have been programs serving a fairer balance of women and men.

With three exceptions, the types of training offered in HLI women's training programs were very limited. While men's training included welding, carpentry, building maintenance, tractor driving, nursery work, auto mechanics, industrial skills, landscaping, janitorial skills, farming, and business management, training for women generally included only industrial sewing and marketing of crafts, with hotel cleaning added at two sites. In an HLI project in Marion, North Carolina, however, two women participated with men in agricultural training at nearby Warren Wilson College; and in another project in Portland, Oregon, women participated with men in three training courses that provided instruction in nursery, janitorial, and industrial skills. While some resettlement workers have claimed that training women in such fields draws complaints from male refugee leaders, in both cases community leaders supported women's participation in a broader range of training programs (Kue 1985; Saechao 1985; Bliatout 1986; Hopkins 1985).

One of the most innovative programs for women supported by HLI funds was the Pa Ndau* Development Program in the state of Wisconsin (not included in the evaluation). This program, designed specifically for Hmong women within the state's well-developed Hmong MAA structure, included short-term training by a crafts consultant in five cities with significant Hmong settlements.

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*Pa ndau is the Hmong term for traditional women's needlework.

Women received training in small business management, taxes, bookkeeping, pricing, and marketing. They also participated in training workshops on the forming of women's organizations. Culminating the Pa Ndau Development Program was the organization of two women's conferences: a women's leadership conference and a pa ndau conference featuring a well-known crafts marketer from Philadelphia (Levy 1986).

Refugee Health Professional/Paraprofessional Retraining Project

Another national project initiated by ORR in 1983 (but not in operation until 1984) was the Refugee Health Professional/Paraprofessional Retraining Project (RHPPRP). Unlike TAP and HLI programs, which have trained refugees largely for the secondary labor market, RHPPRP is one of the few federally funded programs that has supported training for jobs in the primary market. Moreover, because of the variety of skill levels for which training has been offered, the educational background of the participants has ranged from refugees with very limited education to those who had professional training in Southeast Asia.

While RHPPRP has provided employment training for refugee women and men, the program was ostensibly initiated in response to two problems in the resettlement community. The first was the need for more effective and culturally sensitive health services for refugees. In areas with large refugee populations health professionals were becoming increasingly frustrated by the lengthy and cumbersome process of communicating with patients through interpreters, some of whom had no medical experience. The second problem was the difficulties encountered by refugee health professionals and paraprofessionals in obtaining licensure to practice in the United States. Most had lost diplomas and other documents during the war years and found the American licensure system confusing. RHPPRP was designed to provide assistance in the resolution of both these problems by initiating medical training and assistance in obtaining licensure for refugees who would subsequently take increasingly responsible roles in the care of refugee patients. The project was funded at less than $500,000 for five one-year programs (ORR 1984a, 56-59). In four of these, the participants were mainly Southeast Asian refugees.

The sponsoring agencies for these four RHPPRP programs were the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis; Laney College in Oakland; the MEDEX Program of the University of Washington in Seattle; and the University of Hawaii and Kapiolani Community College in Honolulu. In most of the programs, didactic training was conducted in community colleges or technical institutes, while clinical training took place in cooperating hospitals or nursing homes. No stipends for living expenses were offered, but books and supplies, insurance fees, licensing test fees, counseling, specialized English language training, and placement services were provided by the programs. Tuition fees were either included in the program budget or covered by federal and state student grants. At least two of the programs were provided during evening and weekend hours to make training available for employed refugees, in keeping with ORR guidelines (ORR 1984d, 56-59; American Public Health Association 1984; ORR 1983b).

Initial enrollments in RHPPRP projects ranged from fourteen in the smallest program to thirty-eight in the largest. More women than men participated in the programs. Students ranged in age from twenty to fifty years of age, with the largest number between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five. High attrition rates in some of the project's Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) programs appeared to be due to the experimental nature of the refugee programs, but should be evaluated in relation to rates for mainstream LPN classes, which are also high. The attrition rates for the refugee LPN programs ranged from 30 percent to 57 percent. However, the attrition rate in the LPN programs in public vocational institutes and community colleges generally range between 40 percent and 50 percent (List 1986; Boyer 1986; Nardi 1986a; Riddick 1985).

Secondary Wage Earners Project and Enhanced Skills Training Project

In 1984 two additional national discretionary projects that included employment training were initiated by ORR. The first, known as the Secondary Wage Earners Project, was a relatively small project funded at $647,981. This was designed to provide skills training and job placement to previously underserved groups including women, youth, and older men. The purpose of the project was to increase the number of wage earners per household--primarily through the employment of women--in order to get refugee families off public assistance rolls. The second project, known as the Enhanced Skills Training Project, was a considerably larger project, funded at $1,807,862. This project was designed to provide skills training for refugees who had been on public assistance for a long period of time and had few marketable skills, in an effort to dissuade them from moving to California. Training programs funded by these projects did not begin operation until the end of 1984 or early 1985 (ORR 1984b; ORR 1984c; ORR 1985a, 54-57).

The Secondary Wage Earners Project was initiated in response to the findings of the Southeast Asian Refugee Self-Sufficiency Study, commissioned by ORR in 1981. The study indicated that the single most important factor in refugee self-sufficiency was the participation of more than one family member in the labor market. The project was also a response to the Self-Sufficiency Study's finding that women were severely underserved by employment training programs and placement services. The ORR announcement of the Secondary Wage Earners Project stated that its purpose was to "increase the number of wage earners in these households thereby reducing their dependency on cash and other public assistance" (ORR 1984c, 1). In this regard, the project reflects the overriding goal of HHS refugee policy.

Three out of five programs funded by the project provided child care training. Most of these provided instruction that included small business management, nutrition, emergency care, child development, and English language skills. In Wisconsin child care training was tested in three MAAs and later extended to all MAAs in the state with renewed Secondary Wage Earners funding. However, while women were trained and certified, most continued to provide child care within the extended family without compensation, as before (Levy 1986). Undoubtedly many feared jeopardizing their family eligibility for public assistance while working in a low-paid occupation which could not contribute enough to the family income to make it self-supporting.

About three times as many programs were funded by the Enhanced Skills Training Program, but only two included training designed for refugee women. One provided technical assistance for Hmong women in the production and marketing of crafts. Another provided three months of training in power sewing and placement in minimum wage jobs for twenty Hmong and Lao women, as well as training for twenty-five others in cottage industry handcrafts (ORR 1984b).

SUMMARY OF POLICY AND TRAINING

Federal refugee training policy has clearly reflected United States domestic and foreign policy goals. The stringent training guidelines for early training programs in Arlington, Virginia, illustrate the underlying philosophy of HEW and the American public welfare system. In keeping with the philosophy of the Poor Law of 17th century England, and the notion that the poor are lazy, welfare recipients in the United States are provided with a minimum of assistance, lest their indolence be encouraged (Piven and Cloward 1971, 34, fn. 67).

In the late 1970s the National Coalition of Refugee Resettlement was successful in forging the Refugee Act of 1980, which was based on the needs of the refugee community and called for adequate training opportunities for both men and women. The enactment of this act coincided with the crisis of the boat people and President Jimmy Carter's leading role in the international conference in Geneva called by the United Nations in July 1979. Worldwide concern over the tragedy occurring in Southeast Asia and foreign policy concerns over the United States' continuing role in the region, undoubtedly influenced congressional approval of the act.

With the implementation of the new domestic policies of the Reagan administration in 1981, however, refugee policy departed considerably from the Act of 1980. The new policy emphasized reduced spending on refugee resettlement by reducing admissions, restricting income support, and limiting social services, including employment training. Memorandums and directives reflected the notion that unemployment did not result primarily from the lack of skills or job market conditions, but rather from a "dependent" state of mind. This is well illustrated by ORR's 12 March 1982 announcement of the eighteen-month regulation, which stated that one of the major objectives of the new ruling was to "reduce the likelihood of unnecessary welfare dependency resulting from extended periods of special support" (ORR 1982b).

The eighteen-month rule limited training opportunities for both men and women refugees by reducing eligibility for cash assistance that provided support during full-time training. The 1982 Refugee Assistance Amendments further restricted training by calling for employment of refugees immediately after arrival and the scheduling of training in nonworking hours.

It was not until ORR was confronted with the major resettlement crises of 1982 that more training programs were developed. Through the establishment of TAP, HLI, and the three smaller programs comprising RHPPRP, the Secondary Wage Earners Project, and the Enhanced Skills Training Project, the ORR embarked upon a program to train refugees (albeit largely for the secondary labor market) in an effort to reduce the number of refugee families on public assistance. These programs provided many refugees with their first training opportunity, but women continued to be underserved.

PART III

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS

Sixty-nine refugee women's training programs at fourteen sites were included in this research project. These represent most of the women's programs developed at the ten main study sites and five additional programs of particular interest to the project. All of the programs studied were developed during the first ten years of resettlement, from 1975 to 1985.

Fourteen of the programs were women's preemployment training projects, composed largely of English language instruction, basic mathematics, and cross-cultural skills training. The remaining fifty-five programs were employment training programs designed specifically for refugee women or programs that enrolled significant numbers of refugee women. The fields of employment training represented by these programs were limited to a narrow range of six occupations, most of which are, or have been, sex-segregated fields of work. Thirty-two of the programs trained women in the most common occupations among refugee women: industrial sewing, cleaning, and electronics assembly. Twenty-three additional programs provided training in child care, small business management, and health care.

With the exception of training in health care, all the employment training programs prepared women for low-skilled, low-paid, unstable work in the secondary labor market. While small business management training was geared to self-employment, the types of business that the women were trained to manage were labor-intensive enterprises with low earnings, such as home-based child care, or enterprises based on low-paid work of other refugees, such as handwork sales or ethnic restaurants.

Seventy percent of the women's training programs studied were federally funded and subject to the guidelines of federal refugee funding projects. These guidelines generally included the stipulation that training must be short-term (less than one year) and that a high percentage of the trainees must be placed in jobs by the end of the project, in keeping with the overriding federal goal of reducing welfare rolls. Federal announcements of funding programs consistently avoided any mention of economic or other benefits that might derive from the programs for the refugee women and their families.

While both men and women were trained in federal refugee programs for jobs in the secondary labor market, within that labor market the sex-segregated job structure restricted the women to even lower wage levels than the men. Moreover, the women who had no employment training found the types of jobs available to them extremely limited.

This is well illustrated by the job placements in Portland, Oregon, during the month of November 1984 (see tables 2 and 3). Although most of the trained refugees--men and women--were placed in low-paid employment, seventeen out of twenty-five women (68 percent) who were placed in jobs during that month earned starting wages of less than $4 an hour, while only twelve out of thirty men placed (40 percent) earned under $4. Of the men and women placed in non-sex-typed jobs, eighteen of thirty-six placed (50 percent) earned less than $4 an hour. Only two refugee women without training were placed in jobs during the month. It should also be noted that Portland has developed one of the most efficient refugee employment programs in the country and has made a deliberate attempt to encourage women to participate in all training programs. As a result, janitorial training is now a non-sex-typed program with women constituting about 50 percent of the placements. As the coordinator of the Refugee Employment Project pointed out, none of the refugees placed at

Table 2

Hourly Wages of Southeast Asian Refugees with Training

Portland, Oregon, November 1984

Wages Per Hour	Traditionally Female Jobs	Traditionally Male Jobs	Non-Sex-Typed Jobs
Less than $3.35			
$3.35 - 3.99			
	7 Power sewing @ 3.35	5 Brass workers @ 3.35	1 Clerical worker @ 3.35*
	2 Power sewing @ 3.50	1 Foundry worker @ 3.35	3 Clothing mfg. @ 3.35
	3 Power sewing @ 3.75	2 Carpenters @ 3.50	1 Clothing mfg. @ 3.50
	1 Power sewing @ 3.80	1 Machine operat. @ 3.50	1 Clothing mfg. @ 3.65
	3 Housekeeping @ 3.35	1 Machine operat. @ 3.55	2 Janitors @ 3.35
	1 Receptionist @ 3.50*	1 Electric repair @ 3.75	1 Janitor @ 3.75
		1 Baker @ 3.75	1 Nursery @ 3.35
			1 Nursery @ 3.35*
			1 Elec. assm. @ 3.35
			6 Elec. assm. @ 3.50
$4.00 - 4.99			
	1 Housekeeper @ 4.00	1 Cook @ 4.00	3 Elec. assm. @ 4.00
	1 Housekeeper @ 4.10	1 Groundskeeper @ 4.00	2 Elec. assm. @ 4.25
	1 Power sewing @ 4.50	1 Groundskeeper @ 4.25	5 Janitors @ 4.00
	2 Dental asst. @ 4.00	3 Groundskeepers @ 4.50	
		1 Machine operat. @ 4.00	
		1 Machine operat. @ 4.10	
		1 Machine operat. @ 4.25	
		1 Watch repair @ 4.00	
		1 Bus/truck driv. @ 4.00	
		1 Auto body spec. @ 4.50	
		1 Baker @ 4.85	
$5.00 - 5.99			
	2 Housekeepers @ 5.00*	1 Baker @ 5.00	2 Janitors @ 5.00
		1 Groundskeeper @ 5.00*	1 Janitor @ 5.00*
		1 Carpenter @ 5.50	1 Interpreter @ 5.50*
			1 Teacher's aide @ 5.75
$6.00 - 6.99			
	1 Receptionist @ 6.00	1 Cook @ 6.00	1 Elec. assm. @ 6.00
			1 Clerical wkr. @ 6.00*
			1 Interpreter @ 6.75*
$7.00 - 7.99			
		1 Mechanic @ 7.00	

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* Part-time.
SOURCE: Refugee Employment Project, Portland, Oregon, 19 February 1985.

TABLE 3

Hourly Wages of Southeast Asian Refugees without Training

Portland, Oregon, November 1984

Wages Per Hour	Traditionally Female Jobs	Traditionally Male Jobs	Non-Sex-Typed Jobs
Less than $3.35		3 Laborers @ 3.10*	
$3.35 - 3.99	1 Laundry wkr. @ 3.35*	6 Laborers @ 3.35*	2 Dishwashers @ 3.35
		1 Laborer @ 3.55	1 Dishwasher @ 3.35*
		3 Car wash @ 3.35	2 Dishwashers @ 3.50
			1 Waiter/ress @ 3.35*
			1 Packager @ 3.35*
			1 Packager @ 3.50*
			1 Packager @ 3.75
$4.00 - 4.99		2 Laborers @ 4.00*	
		1 Laborer @ 4.80	
		1 Busser @ 4.50	
$5.00 - 5.99	1 Laundry wkr. @ 5.07	1 Laborer @ 5.00*	
		1 Laborer @ 5.00	
		1 Laborer @ 5.75	

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* Part-time.
SOURCE: Refugee Employment Project, Portland, Oregon, 19 February 1985.

under $4 an hour would receive a raise that would eventually make it possible for the refugee to support a family on that job (Hopkins 1985).

WOMEN'S PREEMPLOYMENT TRAINING

While the fourteen preemployment programs for refugee women varied in structure, virtually all were designed primarily for women with limited education. In addition to English language instruction, basic arithmetic, and cross-cultural skills training, most programs included field trips to clinics, schools, and grocery stores, as well as open-ended discussions of women's health issues, child-rearing, changing family roles, rape and sexual harassment, and employment. Above all, these programs attempted to provide a supportive atmosphere that enabled refugee women to gain the self-esteem and assertiveness necessary to function in American society and to enter the labor force.

In the course of the decade from 1975 to 1985, four women's preemployment programs were initiated in the Northwest: in Portland and Salem, Oregon, and Seattle and Tacoma, Washington. In the Midwest, a preemployment program was established in St. Paul, and was extended briefly to Minneapolis, Minnesota. A Women's Survival English class in Elgin, Illinois, also included most of the activities of the preemployment programs. In the Northeast, two programs were formed in Providence, Rhode Island, and another in New York City. In the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, with its large and diverse refugee population, four women's preemployment programs were established during this period.

Seven of the fourteen women's preemployment programs were federally funded, one was state funded, and six were privately funded. The number of programs in operation peaked in 1982, when nine were in action.

The number dropped rapidly after that year, reflecting the policy changes of the Reagan administration. By 1984 there were no federally funded women's preemployment projects at any of the sites, although one state-funded project and three privately supported projects continued through 1985.

Women's Cultural Skills Training Program
Portland, Oregon, 1977-82

The Women's Cultural Skills Training Program in Portland, Oregon, was the first preemployment training program designed specifically for Southeast Asian refugee women in the United States. It was sponsored by the Indochinese Cultural and Service Center (ICSC), a social service agency established in May 1976 to assist newly arrived refugees. The concept of women's programs began to evolve in November of that year. Several ICSC staff had become increasingly concerned about mental health problems that were developing among refugee women in the resettlement community. A primary factor appeared to be the isolation of these women in their homes, while other family members went to work or attended school. None of the women were participating in refugee English language or employment training, most were separated from relatives and friends, and the majority could not function adequately in the larger society around them (Ferguson 1980, i,5; Wagner 1985).

In early 1977 several women on the ICSC staff initiated English language and cultural skills training specifically for refugee women in an old house owned by the agency in the Hollywood District of Portland--where many refugees had settled. By obtaining a small federal grant of about $15,000, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) funding for several staff positions, and an assortment of part-time volunteers, they were able to start a program for about thirty refugee women. The women brought their children with them to the program, and initially infants stayed with their mothers while preschool-aged children wandered around the classroom. Transportation was provided for women who needed it until they learned to use public transportation.

In 1978 the program received a federal grant of $100,000, which facilitated the hiring of full-time paid staff and the establishment of an educational preschool program for children from two to five years of age. Additional space for the rapidly growing group of women and children became available when ICSC and the women's program moved to larger quarters at Neighborhood House, an old settlement house in southwest Portland. Federal funding for the project was renewed annually until 1982 (Wagner 1985).

By 1980 Portland's refugee population had grown to 13,000, with 600 new arrivals per month during the peak of the refugee influx. The women's program had served approximately 500 women since it started in 1977 and served about 300 more each year for the next two years. Participants were divided into four levels, with three classes meeting three times a week for three hours, and two classes meeting two times a week for four hours. Most women attended for a period of one year, although some with handicaps that made their participation in other programs unfeasible remained in the program for several years. During its early years the program served all ethnic groups represented in the refugee population. By 1980 the focus was narrowed to include only Hmong and Mien women, as they had the greatest need for training due to their rural background and lack of education (Ferguson 1980, 5-6).

For the American and Southeast Asian women who developed the Women's Cultural Skills Training Program there were virtually no models available, and the program design was based on their perception of the women's needs. The program provided English language training for two hours in the morning, and cultural skills training--through interpreters--for two hours in the afternoon. Lunch time was designated as a time for staff and participants to interact in a relaxed setting and to establish supportive relationships among the participants as well as between staff and participants (Wagner 1985).

Cultural skills classes consisted of training in basic survival skills such as dialing emergency numbers on the telephone, purchasing prescriptions, using public transportation, and buying groceries. During the early years much of the training was experimental. For example, during trips to the grocery store, the women learned to calculate prices by weight in order to determine the value of the item, and also how to determine the correct number of food stamps to give the cashier (many women had been cheated by cashiers when they handed them the entire book). The women were also trained to protect themselves from sexual assault after one of the women experienced kidnapping and near-rape by an American man (Bounketh 1985; Ferguson 1980, 7).

Program staff members were convinced that one of the most important goals of the program, particularly in terms of preemployment training, was the development of self-confidence and a measure of assertiveness in the refugee women. This was accomplished partly by developing English language and cultural skills that enabled the women to be more self-reliant. It was also accomplished through the development of a supportive atmosphere for learning and building self-esteem, and through the development of close personal ties between staff members and participants (Ferguson 1980, 5).

While participants in this program (terminated in 1982) were not available for interviewing, a Southeast Asian staff member who had been involved with the program since its beginning described the women's experience as she perceived it. She pointed out that many of the women had very low self-images when they entered the program, and were fearful of getting jobs. Some wanted to obtain paid work that they could do at home but did not want to work outside the home. This was partly because they had never worked outside the family home and farm before, and partly because they were afraid they would not understand instructions and might make mistakes. With gentle encouragement by the staff, however, some women did obtain jobs after they left the program, and others enrolled in more advanced English language and skills training at a community college (Bounketh 1985).

When resettlement training policy changed in 1982, the women's program changed its emphasis in an effort to maintain funding for refugee women's services. The Women's Cultural Skills Training Program became the Women's Specialized Employment Program. Even with this change, which conformed with the new policy emphasis on employment services, the program continued for only one more year before it was terminated in 1983 (Wagner 1985).

Several refugee women's programs were modeled after the Women's Cultural Skills Training Program. In 1979 a similar program was developed by the YWCA Refugee Program in Salem, Oregon, and received federal funds through a subcontract with the Portland program. In Salem, a craft cooperative and a housecleaning training project were added to the program. The Indochinese Women's Program, established in Seattle in 1980, was also based on the Portland model. In 1981 the curriculum of the Women's Cultural Skills Training Program was published with the assistance of a grant from the Ford Foundation, thereby making it readily available to other resettlement workers throughout the country (Baack et al. 1981).

Indochinese Women's Program
Seattle, Washington, 1980-83

The Indochinese Women's Program in Seattle, sponsored by the Greater Seattle YMCA, was established in 1980 at the peak of the second wave of Southeast Asian refugees who arrived from 1978 to 1982. By 1980 the refugee population in the Seattle metropolitan area had reached a total of about

8,000, and additional refugees were arriving at a rate of 500 per month (Taylor 1983).

While the women's program in Seattle was modeled after the Portland program, an important difference between the two programs was the fact that the earlier program in Portland was federally funded while the Seattle program was primarily privately funded. Initial funding for the latter program was provided by the Northwest Area Foundation, which awarded the project a three-year, declining, conditional grant of $72,570. Additional funds were obtained from a variety of private sources, and during the last year of the program a federally funded housecleaning training project was added to the program. The annual budget for the Seattle program averaged about $50,000 as compared to $100,000 or more available annually for the larger Portland program (Taylor 1983).

One of the objectives of the Seattle program was to adapt the Portland model for volunteer-based women's programs with smaller budgets. The paid staff in Seattle included a full-time program director, a part-time program coordinator, and three part-time interpreters. The instructors were all volunteers and were trained in the program each term. About a hundred volunteers were trained over a period of three years. Initially the training process consisted of observing classes in session, participating in team teaching situations, and finally teaching classes independently. Later the training of English language teachers was conducted by the staff of Tacoma Community House, an agency serving refugees in Tacoma, Washington (Taylor 1983; Taylor 1985).

Although the use of volunteers had some disadvantages--including the high turnover of teachers and, in the case of the housecleaning project, frequent uncertainty as to how many volunteers would be available--nevertheless it also had the advantage of bringing a great variety of people with numerous skills and interests into the program. These included university students, ex-Peace Corps volunteers, and concerned citizens from the larger community. The involvement of many volunteers also served to publicize the program and to increase public awareness of the refugees' problems (Taylor 1985).

Like the Portland program, the Indochinese Women's Program in Seattle provided English language training in the morning and urban skills training in the afternoon. As in Portland, lunch time was looked upon as an occasion for developing close bonds between staff and participants. Child care was provided for the children of both the participants and the volunteers. Transportation was provided until the women learned to use public transportation. In Seattle, the women attended classes from Monday through Thursday for eleven-week terms, and were allowed to continue for as long as a year if more training was needed before going on to English language training at the community colleges or getting a job. A total of 286 women were trained during the three years the program was in operation (Taylor 1985).

The main objective of the Seattle program, like that of the Portland program, was to create a supportive environment in which the women could develop a positive self-image and the self-confidence they needed to function in American society and to find employment (Taylor 1985).

From the viewpoint of the program director, the Seattle program had the flexibility to achieve its objectives because it was not inhibited by federal performance requirements and guidelines, except in the housecleaning training project during the last year. The director considered this flexibility a great asset because it allowed the staff to shape the curriculum in response to the changing needs of the participants (Taylor 1985).

A variety of special projects was continually being added to the curriculum of the Seattle program as needs arose among the participants. These included an after-school domestic sewing project to provide low-cost family clothing, a craft-marketing project that eventually led to the development of a marketing cooperative, and a gardening project to provide fresh vegetables for family use. A community agency also provided training in self-defense against sexual assault--a very real problem for refugee women (Taylor 1985).

In April 1982, in response to the desperate situation of many women in the program whose households had been adversely affected by the eighteen-month limitation on public assistance, the staff of the Indochinese Women's Program initiated a Housecleaning Training and Placement Project. Six months later, in October, the program received federal funding in the form of a performance-based TAP contract for $16,453 to continue the project through the spring of 1983 (Koosis 1983).

In the course of the housecleaning project, four eight-week training sessions were provided, and a total of forty-two Mien, ethnic Lao, and Cambodian women completed the training. About thirty volunteers were involved in the training, which included instruction in vocational English, use of cleaning products and equipment, making appointments by telephone, recording wages, and completing social security and income tax forms. Hands-on instruction and practice cleaning took place in private homes. After federal funding was provided, the women received a stipend of $3.50 per hour for their work as provided by the TAP contract (Koosis 1983).

Of the twenty women trained in the initial spring and summer sessions, only one had a full-time job by October. Fifteen were working part-time in private homes at $4 to $5 an hour, earning a total of $40 to $50 a week. After twenty-two more women were trained in the federally funded fall and winter sessions, an intensive publicity campaign was conducted in an effort to meet the contract requirements of placing eighteen graduates in jobs that provided at least forty hours of work a month. This effort was successful only after many volunteers and other friends of the project employed the women themselves for part-time work. The maximum earned by these women was $200 a month (Koosis 1983).

By April 1983, when the project was concluded, only two women had full-time jobs, while five others were working twenty hours a week in office cleaning, restaurant work, or laundry jobs. Fourteen had housecleaning jobs in private homes. Seven of these worked fifteen to twenty-two hours per week, and the remaining seven worked ten to fifteen hours per week. Three others worked thirty hours per week in housecleaning and child care jobs. A total of 215 employers were enlisted in the effort to employ forty-two women, a reflection of the short-term, unstable nature of housekeeping as an occupation (Koosis 1983).

In the final report of the housecleaning training project, the project coordinator summed up the results by pointing out that although more women were trained than was originally planned due to the federal funding obtained in October 1982, nevertheless the economic situation of the women in the Indochinese Women's Program and their families continued to be very serious. In addition to the fact that most of the women worked only part-time, 25 percent of their husbands were unemployed while another 25 percent also worked only part-time (Koosis 1983).

Family Living in America
St. Paul, Minnesota, 1977-

The Family Living in America program for Hmong refugee women in St. Paul, Minnesota differs from most refugee women's programs in that it was developed from a preexisting program for low-income women in the city's public housing projects. Soon after Southeast Asian refugees began to arrive in St. Paul in the mid 1970s, a few Hmong families began to move into public housing projects. As the Hmong population in the city and in the projects grew, Hmong women began to appear at classes offered by the Homemakers' Program, an adult education program provided to project residents by the St. Paul Public Schools. Although women living in the projects previously had generally attended the classes only with reluctance, the Hmong women quickly filled the classes and became the dominant group in the program (Hatteberg 1983). Their eager participation apparently derived from their urgent need to acquire basic survival skills and the fact that few Hmong women had had the opportunity for education in Laos.*

By the early 1980s, when the Hmong population in the St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area peaked at nearly 12,000, as many as 700 Hmong women were attending the Homemakers' Program each term, and the name of the program was changed to Family Living in America (Hatteberg 1982, 1). This was one of the very few programs open to refugee women with limited education in the early years of resettlement in Minnesota.

Since the late 1970s funding for the Family Living Program has included foundation grants and federal monies, but the main support for the program has been provided by state funds for Adult Vocational Education and Community Education Services of the St. Paul Public Schools. In 1985 the program's budget totaled $238,550 (Hatteberg 1986).

During the initial period of Hmong participation in the program, beginning in 1977, Hmong and American women attended classes together. While some teachers believed it might be possible to mainstream the Hmong women, and experimented with visual demonstrations to convey information to them, it soon became apparent that this method had serious limitations, and eventually federal funding was obtained to employ bilingual liaisons to provide translating and other services. Initially, specific days were set aside for classes for Hmong women, but by 1982 all the participants were Hmong (Hatteberg 1979; Dewey 1986).

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*Some of the data on this program has been used in different form in an earlier study by the author entitled "Training Hmong Women: For Marginal Work or Entry Into the Mainstream?" in The Hmong in Transition, edited by Glenn L. Hendricks, Bruce T. Downing, and Amos S. Deinard. (Staten Island: Center for Migration Studies of New York; Minneapolis: The Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project of the University of Minnesota, 1985).

The goal of the original Homemakers' Program was to help low-income women meet the needs of their families by training them in domestic skills, home management, and parenting. Homemakers' classes included topics such as "Low Cost Meals," "Decorating on a Shoestring," "Clothing--New and Renew," and "Living with Children." Women were also encouraged to explore careers that required home economics skills. Classes were conveniently located within walking distance of the participants' apartments in unoccupied apartments provided by the St. Paul Public Housing Agency at a nominal fee in return for instruction in the care and cleaning of the apartments and appliances. Child care was provided in one of the rooms of the teaching apartments (Hatteberg 1979; Hatteberg 1983).

After Hmong women were provided separate classes in the late 1970s, these classes focused on survival skills such as operating the stoves and refrigerators in the apartments, dialing emergency numbers on the telephone, shopping at the supermarket, and dressing for Minnesota winters. By the early 1980s, however, most of the Hmong families in public housing had lived in St. Paul for several years. The women no longer needed instruction in survival skills, and the program reverted to its earlier focus on training in domestic skills. Recently, in keeping with the current emphasis of the state education department, refugee women in the Family Living Program also have been required to participate in parenting classes one morning a week, in addition to choosing from other morning or afternoon classes in sewing, knitting, cooking, and other domestic skills (Hatteberg 1982, 2; Hatteberg 1986).

An exception to this policy occurred during the two years from 1982 to 1984, when federal guidelines for funding received by the program required an emphasis on training women for employment. Hmong women were also asking for employment-related training, and the staff made an attempt to initiate a housecleaning training program. However, without adequate space and equipment, the attempt proved unsuccessful, and the effort to provide training for the labor market was limited to discussions on improving efficiency in home management, in anticipation of the time pressures women encounter when employed outside the home. The teachers also made an effort to incorporate informal English language training into their classroom instruction, and many of the Hmong women participated in the program mainly to improve their English (Hatteberg 1986; Hatteberg 1983; Hatteberg 1982, 3; Xiong, Ka Ying 1985).

From the start, domestic sewing classes were the most popular training in the Family Living Program for several reasons. First, learning to operate a sewing machine did not require a change in cultural values. Second, the classes provided the women with a means of making inexpensive clothes for their families. Third, and perhaps the most important, Hmong women generally perceived the acquisition of machine sewing skills as an avenue to employment, even if the training was on domestic rather than industrial sewing machines, as in the case of this program. This perception was reinforced by the fact that some women obtained cottage industry work from time to time that did not require industrial machines. In a 1983 hand-raising poll of fifteen women in one of the domestic sewing classes, all the women raised their hands when asked if they had had any employment training, and all indicated the training was received in that class (Hatteberg 1983; Dewey 1983; Mason 1983).

On the other hand, cooking and parenting classes both involved an effort on the part of the teachers to change the cultural values of the participants, and neither was popular. The question that arises is whether there is any real justification for attempting to change the food habits of Hmong families whose traditional foods are basically healthful and inexpensive. One teacher said that an effort had been made to demonstrate the use of give-away foods in refugee cooking classes, but these are generally foods the Hmong do not tolerate or do not find appetizing. Another teacher noted that a few foods introduced in cooking classes, such as pizza and fried chicken, were liked by the women but caused undesired weight gain (Dewey 1985; Humes 1983).

A similar question arises over the value of parenting classes in which Hmong women are urged to adopt American child-rearing methods. The lack of interest in these classes by Hmong women may reflect in part their desire for employment training. However, it is also important to Hmong men and women to maintain certain elements of their culture in the household in order to avoid unnecessary family stress.

Although all the Hmong women interviewed expressed a desire for employment training, their individual experiences in the Family Living Program varied widely. A woman of forty-five years of age interviewed in 1985 indicated that since her arrival with her family in St. Paul in 1978 she had had only one job, a dishwashing job in a downtown restaurant that an American friend helped her obtain. It lasted only five months. Her husband had had a CETA job for six months. Her goal was to get a job in industrial sewing, and she had a well-defined plan for achieving that goal. With five children to care for--two not yet in school--she had attended classes in the Family Living Program every year since her arrival because the program provided child care. When interviewed in 1985, she pointed out that her eldest daughter was then nearly sixteen years old and was able to care for the children in the evening. The older woman had therefore entered a general equivalency diploma (GED) program provided for refugees with limited education at a local high school. She had also gone to the St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute and passed the English test required for enrolling in industrial sewing. She hopes to enter this class in 1987, when her youngest child enters school. When asked why she was taking the Family Living class in home sewing again after already taking it several times before, she said she didn't know if this class would help her get a job, but it did help her learn more English.

A younger woman also interviewed in 1985 had arrived in Minneapolis in 1982. At the age of seventeen, with no prior education, she entered Southwest High School in Minneapolis, attending for two and a half years, from March 1982 until June 1984. She studied English and math in a special class for refugee students, and also had one hour per day in a class taught by a bilingual Hmong teacher who helped refugee students with their work in mainstream classes. This woman's mainstream classes included social studies, which she described as very hard to understand, and geography and history, which she couldn't understand at all. She also took a mainstream class in industrial sewing.

A bilingual Hmong counselor at the high school told her and other Hmong students how to get CETA summer jobs in 1982 and 1983, and they painted houses for $3.50 an hour for two months each summer. Before she finished her high school program, the counselor also asked her what kind of job she would like to have after high school but did not make any suggestions.

At the time of the interview, this woman was married and had a one-year-old child. The family lived in a public housing project. Since moving to the project she had begun to attend Family Living classes every day, including two different sewing classes, knitting, cooking, and parenting. She enrolled in these classes because child care was provided and she had no relatives to care for her baby. She too wanted to get a job in industrial sewing. She felt she was not learning very much in her sewing classes because she already had taken a more advanced class in high school, but she continued to attend because it helped her learn more English.

Cambodian Women's Project

New York, New York, 1983-

The Cambodian Women's Project in New York represents a fourth model of women's preemployment training programs. While the project's primary goals of providing survival skills training and building self-confidence have been modeled after those of earlier women's programs in Portland and Seattle, the scattered placement of Cambodian refugees in New York's large metropolitan area has required a program structure very different from that of the programs in the Northwest. Sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the Cambodian Women's Project was initiated in 1983 in response to the immense acculturation difficulties confronting the 500 Cambodian families who settled in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx in 1981 and 1982 (Bruno 1984b, 9).

Prior to 1981 the United States accepted relatively few Cambodians for resettlement. Looked upon as illegal aliens by the Thai government and as temporarily displaced persons by resettlement countries, Cambodian refugees were consistently denied the asylum and resettlement rights afforded to other Southeast Asians. It was not until some 40,000 Cambodian refugees were forced back across the border at gunpoint by Thai military forces in 1979--resulting in the loss of tens of thousands of lives--that shocked Western nations brought pressure on the Thai government to provide temporary asylum for the Cambodians in return for promises of resettlement by third countries. Subsequently the United States government agreed to resettle 20,000 Cambodian refugees within a period of one year, beginning in 1981 (Mason and Brown 1983, 12-14; Bruno 1983a, 2; 1984b, 9).

The Office of Refugee Resettlement, the federal agency responsible for domestic resettlement of refugees, designed the Khmer Cluster Project in an effort to settle the refugees in newly created Cambodian communities in areas not already impacted by Southeast Asian refugees. Twelve sites were selected for Cambodian resettlement, among them New York City--evidently without adequate consideration of the many negative effects such a megalopolitan environment might have on refugees from rural Cambodia (ORR 1983a, 3; Bruno 1984b, 9).

The State Department's Bureau of Refugee Programs was the federal agency responsible for contracting with voluntary agencies to provide for housing and basic needs for the refugees during the first ninety days after arrival. Approximately 2,000 Cambodian refugees were resettled in New York City in 1981 and 1982. Due to delays in processing, 80 percent arrived between April and June 1982. Under time pressure during this period, voluntary agencies looking for low-cost apartments for the refugees rented much of the housing sight unseen in blighted areas of Brooklyn and the Bronx. Slumlords took advantage of the situation to fill vacant buildings abandoned by earlier tenants. As a result, Cambodians arriving in New York were placed in some of the city's most deteriorated housing, often in apartments with broken windows, no heat or hot water, and leaded paint peeling from the walls. Moreover, the apartment buildings in which the refugees were housed were generally located in high-crime areas where the new arrivals were subjected to repeated robberies and assaults (Bruno 1984a; Bruno 1984b, 9-11).

When the Cambodian Women's Project was initiated in January 1983, the Cambodian refugees were experiencing severe problems and were not receiving support services from any agency. The Khmer Cluster Project in New York had resulted in the dispersal of refugee families in twenty-four different housing sites, including fourteen in the Bronx, eight in Brooklyn, and two in

Manhattan. Thirty percent of the households were headed by women, most of whom were widows whose husbands died in the war years or during the Pol Pot regime. These women have been particularly vulnerable to mental health problems (Bruno 1984b, 12-16; Bruno 1983e, 2; Cambodian Women's Project 1985, 10).

Initially, staff for the Cambodian Women's Project included a full-time American director and a part-time Cambodian student intern. American volunteers served as English language instructors. Two years later the Cambodian program assistant became the full-time director, another Cambodian took her place as assistant, and the English language teachers were paid for the first time. The budget for the first year of the project totaled $37,062. As the program expanded in 1984 the budget was increased to $53,700. In 1985 the program continued to expand, and the total budget reached $70,000, which included a private foundation grant as well as support from the American Friends Service Committee. With the exception of a state grant in 1984 for a refugee mental health conference sponsored by the project, the Cambodian Women's Project was supported entirely by private funds. A staff member expressed the view that private funding generally allowed more flexibility for innovation in programming (Bruno 1984a; Bruno 1983c, 2; Bruno 1986).

The Cambodian Women's Project was structured to provide English language training and survival skills workshops for Cambodian women in their own neighborhoods. For the most part this was accomplished by establishing cooperative links with social agencies, churches, clinics, schools, and police precincts already serving the area. In some cases these institutions were eager to use the women's project as a vehicle for establishing their own programs to serve the Cambodian community. Others provided classroom and child care space or staff for workshop presentations. The women's project also provided English language and survival skills training for homebound women. This took place in buildings where six to ten women with small children gathered in one apartment for informal instruction and discussion of common problems. Other community activities included the organization of tenant associations to pressure landlords to make repairs, visits to public schools attended by Cambodian children, and the formation of a Buddhist temple (Bruno 1984a; Cambodian Women's Project 1984, 3-5; Cambodian Women's Project 1985, 3).

Some of the most successful efforts in cooperation between the Cambodian Women's Project and local institutions occurred in the University Heights area of the Bronx, where the largest number of Cambodian families are concentrated. For example, the staff of the Albert Einstein Comprehensive Family Care Center was particularly interested in providing culturally sensitive medical care for Cambodian families in the area, and took an active part in workshops on health issues of special interest to women. Staff members also employed a full-time Cambodian interpreter to assist in clinic visits; and after treating several Cambodian children for lead poisoning, they conducted tests in the refugees' apartments (Mason 1984).

Another important link was established between the women's project and St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church, also in University Heights. Cooperative efforts by the Cambodian Women's Project and the church resulted in the establishment in September 1983 of St. Rita's Asian Center, which provided English language training, survival skills workshops, home sewing, weaving, and child care for Cambodian women in the neighborhood. A small Cambodian library was also established at the center, which served as a gathering place for cultural and religious events in the Cambodian community as well. In the fall of 1984 the Asian Center moved from St. Nicholas Church to a nearby convent, where the Cambodian women used two floors for workshops and child care, while the basement was made available for Cambodian teenagers' programs (Marshall 1984; Chan 1986).

Although the main focus of the Cambodian Women's Project was not on preparing women for employment, nevertheless this was viewed as a long-range goal. One staff member pointed out that building self-confidence in refugee women is essential to enable them to obtain stable employment. In the meantime staff members were attempting to find an alternative to the exploitative piecework many of the women had been doing at home in an effort to supplement the family income. A local company, developed specifically to take advantage of refugee women's labor, furnished them with industrial machines, which they were required to pay off by working at $1.90 per hour making bow ties, hair clips, and scarves. After the machine was paid off they earned $0.70 per dozen for these items. On the other hand, project staff encouraged older women who had weaving experience in Cambodia to produce traditional scarves on the looms at St. Rita's Center, and this activity increased rapidly in 1985. The scarves were generally sold within the Cambodian community (Bruno 1984a; Bruno 1984b, 17; Chan 1986).

Although the number of training sites varied, six to eight were in operation from the start of the project, serving approximately eighty-five Cambodian women each year. In 1985 the need for family counseling began to outweigh the need for survival skills training among the families that had arrived in 1982 and 1983--evidence that this group was moving into the post-survival phase of resettlement. The increased demand on staff time to meet this need, as well as the higher cost of providing English language classes with paid teachers, made it necessary to decrease the number of classes and workshops, despite the fact that many Cambodians were still arriving. The number of women served in counseling and training sessions totaled nearly 200 in 1985 (Bruno 1986; Chan 1986).

A middle-aged Cambodian widow with six children, interviewed in 1984 in the University Heights neighborhood, reported that she had been studying English at St. Rita's Asian Center for about a year and also took part in a workshop on nutrition. When she and her family arrived from Thailand in late 1981, the priest and nuns at St. Nicholas Church had provided them with winter coats and blankets, as well as kitchen utensils. Since then her family had lived on public assistance, and she was particularly concerned about the frequent rent increases in the building on Andrews Avenue where she lived--just a block from the church.

When asked whether she had ever had a job or employment training she appeared to be worried by the question, and said that she had to take care of her children first and learn English, which was very difficult for her. Later in the conversation, however, she said that she would like to have some employment training in the future, and also that she would like to work at St. Rita's Asian Center when it moved to the new building (the center was planning to hire several refugee women in part-time jobs after the move). She also said she did not know how to sew, and could not even sew for her children, an apparent reference to the piecework sewing many of her Cambodian neighbors on Andrews Avenue were engaged in.

Like many refugee women, this woman appeared to be fearful of working outside her home, although the prospect of working in the supportive atmosphere of St. Rita's Asian Center was less threatening and offered the possibility of earning a little to supplement her income from public assistance.

TRAINING FOR THE GARMENT INDUSTRY

The garment industry provides an excellent example of a highly competitive, labor-intensive industry that employs large numbers of immigrant and refugee women in low-skilled, low-paid, unstable work in the secondary labor market. Garment manufacturing is a declining industry--individual entrepreneurs have declined from 25,000 to 15,000 in the last decade--and managers have attempted to maximize profits by minimizing labor costs. As a result, garment workers (predominantly women) are among the lowest paid industrial workers, averaging $5 per hour in wages, with or without unionization. Women in other jobs related to sewing, such as alterations, also average $5 an hour. Nevertheless, training in sewing has been the most common employment training for women funded by ORR, and in October 1985, 15.9 percent of employed Southeast Asian women were working in sewing occupations, making it the second largest occupational group among employed refugee women (Chaikin 1985; Weiner and Green 1984, 279, 287; Bach 1986).

The garment industry has been structured to exploit the low-cost labor of women since the late nineteenth century. This has been achieved by combining centralized production in a main plant (or "inside shop") with decentralized, subcontracted production in small shops in low-wage, low-rent areas ("outside shops"), and by employing women who sew in their homes (another form of outside shops). In the late twentieth century, as in the late nineteenth century, subcontractors generally make competitive bids on precut garments to be sewn together in outside shops or in women's homes and then returned to the main plant for distribution. Women are hired in outside shops when work is available, and laid off when they are not needed, thereby cutting the costs of labor. Moreover, women working for subcontractors in their homes absorb all the overhead costs, as well as the costs of purchasing and maintaining their sewing machines, and supplying their own thread (Baron and Klepp 1984, 22, 30-31, 38-41; Stansell 1983, 82).

Since the 1960s, a growing trend in the garment industry has been establishment of "runaway shops," first in low-wage nonunion areas of the

American South, and more recently in the Third World countries where women are paid as little as 25 cents per hour. Unskilled or semiskilled production has been moved abroad, while skilled jobs in designing, cutting (traditionally reserved for men), shipping, and distribution are retained in the company's main plant in the United States. As a result of this expansion abroad, jobs for low-skilled women in the United States decreased by one million between 1972 and 1985. On the other hand, companies without the resources to move to a Third World country have turned increasingly to contractors operating underground shops and employing women who work in their homes for less than minimum wage. A large proportion of these women are recent immigrants from Latin America and Asia, as well as Southeast Asian refugees (exemplified by the women of the Cambodian Women's Project in New York) (Safa 1981, 418, 423-4; Chaikin 1985; Bell 1985; Bruno 1984b, 17).

The garment industry has also kept labor costs low--and productivity high--through the widespread use of the piecework system. The successor of the "task system" of the 1870s, the piecework system has allowed a few women who develop considerable speed to raise their earnings. However, the system keeps the earnings of many refugee women, who tend to be cautious, at a low level. Moreover, the piecework system is also used by employers to cut wages by cutting the piece rate. In recent years some companies have instituted a computerized system of determining wages based on a complex decimal system that is confusing to workers and have also used this system to cut wages by cutting piece rates (Lamphere 1979, 260-261, 267; Young 1985).

The use of the piecework system to cut wages arbitrarily and keep labor costs down is illustrated by the experience of an Asian immigrant woman interviewed in St. Paul, Minnesota. This woman had worked in the garment industry since 1964, when she began work at $1.25 per hour, the minimum wage at the time. Over the course of twenty years of work at piece rates in the same company, she had increased her speed sufficiently to earn an average of $9 an hour by the early 1980s, only to be cut back to an average of about $5 an hour by cuts in the piece rate in 1982 and 1984. All the women working in production were affected by the cuts, although the wages of men working as cutters (generally higher than those of machine operators) were not affected. Although the women were union members, male union leaders showed little interest in helping the women fight the new piece rates (Young 1985).

The garment industry has further reduced labor costs by avoiding the establishment of either a structure for personal advancement or a seniority system. With the exception of a few women who may be chosen to make samples or to learn to operate new machines, women in the industry often work in the same position throughout their entire working lives. Moreover, experienced machine operators' jobs are just as insecure as those of newcomers in times of layoffs (Weiner and Green 1984, 283-284).

Training in industrial sewing for Southeast Asian refugee women has two main forms. The first is training designed specifically for refugees, including classes taught in the language of the participants or classes taught in English, with or without a bilingual assistant. The second is training in mainstream classes, either with or without a bilingual assistant to provide special help to refugee participants.

Of the fourteen industrial sewing training programs for Southeast Asian refugee women developed in project study sites from 1975 to 1985, four were located in the Northwest, including one each in Portland, Oregon, and Tacoma, Washington, and two in Seattle, Washington. Projects in California included one at Stockton, and two in Orange County. In the Midwest, training programs were established in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota, and in Milwaukee and Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Industrial sewing training programs were also initiated in Arlington, Virginia, and Marion, North Carolina. Ten of the fourteen programs were federally funded, three were state funded, and one was primarily privately funded.

Industrial Sewing for Hmong Women
Marion, North Carolina, 1984-85

In 1984 an industrial sewing training program was initiated in Marion, North Carolina, for women in the Hmong community of Marion and Morganton, neighboring towns on the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Sponsored by the Hmong Natural Association, the community's mutual assistance association (MAA), the training program was funded by the Highland Lao Initiative (HLI), a federal grant program authorized in 1983 to stem the tide of Hmong migration to California (see part 2). The Hmong Natural Association received a grant of $100,000 to administer a community program that included two employment training components. The first was a farm training program that enrolled mainly men and was budgeted at $8,000. Those who took part in this program received 220 hours of instruction and each participant received a stipend of $150. The second was an industrial sewing program for the women, budgeted at $2,701. Those who took part in this program received 120 hours of instruction and each participant received a stipend of $100 (Hmong Natural Association 1983).

The industrial sewing program, conducted at McDowell Community College in Marion, included instruction in the operation of both domestic and commercial sewing machines. During the first twelve weeks the course focused on the operation of domestic sewing machines, the fundamentals of clothing construction, the use of American patterns, and English terms related to the skills the women were learning. During the second twelve weeks the emphasis was on the operation of industrial sewing machines and mastery of English terms necessary for understanding instructions for contract sewing at home or employment in a garment manufacturing plant. Sixteen women were enrolled, with one group of them meeting in the evening and another during daytime hours. Although funding for child care was included in the program budget, the logistical problems in actually providing this service for children in widely scattered rural areas proved overwhelming, and this aspect of the program was not successful (Kue 1985; Faw 1986).

Sewing classes for the Hmong women were located in a cramped classroom in a trailer behind one of the larger buildings on the McDowell Community College campus. The machines provided had been previously used for a repair training class and were in poor condition. When the advanced evening sewing class (focused on industrial sewing) was observed in November 1984, only one industrial machine was in working order. The instructor indicated that this had been an ongoing problem, and that unless at least one more working industrial machine could be made available, she would have to terminate the course earlier than originally planned (Hughes 1984).

Despite the crowded classroom and poor condition of the equipment, the instructor, a trainer from a recently closed textile mill in the area, had established good rapport with the Hmong women, who appeared to be eager to learn as much as possible about sewing machines and their operation. Lacking industrial machines to practice on, the women resorted to the domestic machines available and worked on clothes for their children made from material donated by the recently closed mill. Although there was no bilingual assistant in the classroom, several women with adequate English translated for the others.

Following the completion of the sewing program, only four women obtained jobs related to their training. In light of the fact that four textile mills in the area had closed in 1984 and 1985, resulting in the loss of thousands of sewing jobs, this low placement rate is not surprising. Another factor in the situation, however, was the fact that many of the women who participated in the sewing program were already employed. These women enrolled in the evening class because they wanted to upgrade their nonsewing jobs in the mills, or because they perceived the program as providing them with a skill that would enable them to find work when layoffs occurred in their current occupations. The four women who obtained sewing jobs in the mills after completing the women's training program subsequently received further training at the mills for a period of three months. During this period they were paid at minimum wage, and after their training was completed they worked at piece rates (Kue 1986; Faw 1986).

An opportunity for contract sewing at home presented itself in 1985 when a local weaver decided to hire Hmong women to sew simple garments from hand-woven materials to be sold at outlets in Texas and elsewhere. The weaver provided the women with precut material to sew together in their homes at a piece rate that brought average wages of about $3.50 per hour for most of the women. The Hmong Natural Association assisted the women by purchasing sewing machines for them to use at home. After a trial period, however, the weaver was not satisfied with either the sewing skills or the English language ability of the women, and the arrangement was discontinued. The fact that many of the Hmong women were already employed full-time was an important factor in this situation, as the employed women were generally the most skilled (Faw 1986).

A Hmong woman of thirty-seven, interviewed in the evening sewing class, had moved to Morganton from St. Paul, Minnesota, after her family was cut off public assistance following the implementation of the federal eighteen-month rule in 1982. While she had been unable to find a job in St. Paul, she found a nonsewing job in a hosiery mill soon after her arrival in Morganton.

Born in 1947 in Xieng Khouang Province in Laos, she had never attended school before she arrived in St. Paul. During her eight months in the Ban Vinai refugee camp in Thailand she had had no opportunity to study English or to gain work experience. In Minnesota she enrolled in English language training at Lao Family Community (a Hmong MAA).

This woman enrolled in the Hmong women's sewing program in Marion because she wanted to upgrade her status at the hosiery mill by getting a sewing job. Her present job was paid by the hour, and her sister-in-law, who had learned to sew in the Family Living Program in St. Paul before moving to Marion, was earning more by sewing at piece rates.

Another woman of twenty, interviewed in the same class, had moved to Morganton from Wausau, Wisconsin, in 1981. When this woman arrived in Wausau in 1976 at the age of twelve, she had never attended school before. After entering the public school in Wausau she spent six months in a special English class for refugee students, and then entered the regular fourth grade class. She stayed in the fourth grade for one year, and in the fifth grade for one year, and then skipped to the eighth grade. In 1980 at the age of about sixteen, she married, and at the time of the interview in 1984 she had three children.

After her arrival in Morganton she got a job as a translator for the county social worker because of her good English language skills. She was paid $6 an hour, but worked only part-time as needed by the social worker. When the social worker called her for work, she had to quickly find elderly people in the neighborhood to care for her children before the social worker picked her up for visits to Hmong households. There were no raises and no medical benefits. In August 1984 she lost her job due to budget cuts and enrolled in the evening sewing class in the hope of getting a sewing job a few years later, when her children would go to school.

Industrial Sewing, Alterations, and Tailoring for Refugee Women
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1982-85, and
Power Sewing and Apparel Arts for Refugee Women
St. Paul, Minnesota, 1983-85

The Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute (TVI) both provided refugee-specific and mainstream training in sewing for Southeast Asian refugee women from 1982 to 1985. Refugee women with adequate educational background enrolled in mainstream classes throughout this period, but the largest number, those with limited education, enrolled in special programs designed to meet their educational needs. At MATC four federally funded training programs in power sewing for refugee women were offered from 1982 to 1984. Since 1984, however, only mainstream training in this field has been available. At St. Paul TVI refugee-specific and mainstream training in sewing continued to be available through 1985. These programs were funded by state educational funds, as school officials had decided not to apply for federal funding for refugee training programs after 1982. This decision was made in response to federal policy changes that restricted most funding to short-term training projects that guaranteed immediate placement in entry-level jobs--generally low-skilled, low-paid jobs with little potential for advancement (Lewin 1984; Trejo 1985a).

Of the four federally funded training programs in industrial sewing offered at MATC during this period, three were bilingual programs. Bilingual staff was present in the classroom to translate the teacher's instructions and to assist students with problems that might arise. Two short courses, extending over a period of three months each, were offered in the spring and fall of 1982. The first was held in the evening and the second during the day. Subsequently a longer course extending over eight months was offered from September 1982 to May 1983 and from September 1983 to May 1984, again alternating between evening and daytime classes to make the program available to as many refugee women as possible. Of the sixty-four women trained in these four courses, thirty-nine were placed in jobs related to their training (Lewin 1984).

Once placed in garment manufacturing companies in Milwaukee, most of the women earned $3.35 per hour in starting wages and experienced frequent layoffs. If they worked in small companies, as the majority of the women did, their wages remained close to the minimum wage level, paid at an hourly rate. If they worked in large companies they were more likely to work eventually at piece rates. Women who were able to develop adequate speed over a period of several years might eventually earn $8 or $9 per hour by working at piece rates, but many refugee women could not compete with the experienced workers. Most women did not get medical benefits, and this caused many to quit their jobs in frustration in order to enable their families to continue to receive medical coverage provided for public assistance recipients (Troung 1984; Xiong, Shoua 1984).

In September 1984, after federally funded sewing programs for refugee women at MATC were terminated, the author observed mainstream classes in tailoring and power sewing in which refugee women were enrolled. Although refugee students in these programs are tested for English language skills before enrollment in the class, many of the women interviewed reported they were having difficulty understanding the instructors. Moreover, several instructors themselves expressed frustration regarding communication problems with refugee participants. In two instances instructors asked the interpreter who accompanied the author for help in resolving immediate problems in communication.

A young Hmong woman in a tailoring class at MATC, who was interviewed by the author in late 1984, pointed out that although she had paid $39.85* in tuition to enroll in the course, she was having difficulty understanding much of what the instructor said. One of three Southeast Asian refugee women in a class of about twenty, this woman said she had not enrolled in bilingual classes offered earlier because her husband was working and she had no one to care for her children. When he was laid off she enrolled in the class because he could stay at home. She hoped the course would enable her to get a job in a tailor shop and also to sew for her family at home.

This woman had no schooling in Laos and knew no English when she arrived in Milwaukee in 1979. She heard about the class at MATC from a cousin who had taken it. This woman, like many interviewed in other sites, had no idea how much she might expect to earn in a tailor shop or whether such jobs were available. However, she was aware of the fact that speed was important in sewing jobs and expressed anxiety about getting a job because she was slower than others in the class.

When asked if her English had improved since she enrolled in a class with mainstream students, she replied that she had spoken to American students only a few times. She said that she would like to talk to Americans, but it was very difficult. This woman exemplified the sizable number of women interviewed in mainstream programs in Milwaukee and elsewhere who only partially understood the teacher's instructions and could not communicate well with other students.

Another young Hmong woman interviewed in the same tailoring class exemplified those who do have adequate English language skills for mainstream classes. Like the first woman, she had had no schooling in Laos and knew no

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*Although tuition assistance was available at the Wisconsin Job Service, many refugee women were unaware of this.

English when she arrived in Milwaukee. However, at the time of the interview, her English was far better than that of the first interviewee. After taking one semester of power sewing at MATC, this woman had obtained a job sewing purse straps in a factory. She was paid only $3 an hour--less than the minimum wage--and received no benefits. After a few months she quit the job and returned to MATC to enroll in the tailoring course. She hoped to establish her own tailoring business at home, although she had no training or experience in small business management.

This woman, whose English language skills were adequate for mainstream classes, was not experiencing any serious problems in understanding the instructor and believed that enrolling in a mainstream class had helped her improve her English.

An administrator at MATC pointed out that most agencies that refer refugees for training prefer that their clients enroll in mainstream classes, basing this preference on the premise that if they enroll in refugee specific classes, they will speak their own language all day and will not improve their English. On the other hand, a teacher in a mainstream program that enrolls several refugees each quarter said that she has observed that refugee students who spend most of the day in mainstream classes often become very "pent-up." While she believed there were definite benefits in attending mainstream classes for those with adequate English, she expressed concern regarding the stress that develops among students forced to speak English for long periods of time before their language skills are sufficiently advanced.

At St. Paul TVI a full-fledged bilingual vocational training program for Southeast Asian refugees was established within the larger framework of the Minnesota Bilingual Vocational Training Program, initially established in 1975 to meet the needs of Hispanic students. When Southeast Asian refugees began to arrive in the state soon after the program began, it was extended to serve both groups. The program provided bilingual assistants in the classroom as needed and offered a few courses in Southeast Asian languages. Support services included bilingual counseling and tutoring, as well as preparatory classes in English as a Second Language (ESL), reading, and mathematics (Trejo 1983).

Although bilingual classes for Southeast Asian refugees have been offered since the late 1970s, most of the early courses were male oriented, and it was not until 1983 that a refugee-specific program in industrial sewing was available. In December 1982 a Hmong woman graduated from St. Paul TVI's mainstream apparel arts program, a year-long diploma program. Subsequently this woman was employed as a bilingual assistant for a special class in industrial sewing for Hmong women. The purpose of the class was to provide vocational training for women with very limited education. While English language requirements for mainstream industrial sewing are generally among the lowest required for any vocational programs, it is still difficult for many refugee women to qualify. The Hmong power sewing class required no English and no education. Tuition assistance was obtained through Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) grants, Pell grants, and funds from the state Refugee Program Office (Vang, Mai 1985; Ferrian 1985; Trejo 1986a).

Eighteen Hmong women took part in the Hmong power sewing class which extended over three months, or one quarter, in 1983. During this period the bilingual assistant translated all instructions given by the teacher and assisted the women with problems that arose. Although some of the women lacked self-assurance at the beginning of the quarter, most of the women already knew each other, and ample group support was provided for those who needed it. The class met for four hours each weekday, from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m., beginning with one hour of English instruction, followed by three hours of instruction in power sewing. Most of the students were middle-aged women with large families, but the class also included a few young women in their late teens and early twenties, a few of whom were not married. In general the women's spirits were very high during this program, and absenteeism was minimal (Vang, Mai 1986b; Ferrian 1985).

Of the eighteen women in the program, six got jobs in sewing factories, three went on to more advanced classes, two moved to other states, some got jobs unrelated to the training, and several postponed looking for jobs in order to stay at home with newborn infants (Vang, Mai 1986a).

During the 1985-86 school year, St. Paul TVI initiated a four-quarter bilingual apparel arts program that attracted eight Southeast Asian refugees into a class of eighteen that also included Asian immigrants and mainstream students. The refugees included two Cambodians, four Vietnamese, and two Hmong. In order to enroll in the class, students were required to score at the 200 level or higher on the Structured Tests in English Language (STEL). Although the English skills of those admitted to this program were considerably higher than those of the women in the Hmong power sewing class, the bilingual assistant employed for that class was again employed to help with instruction and the resolution of any communication problems that might arise. The curriculum included instruction in power sewing, the use of cutters, clothing construction, and alterations. Most of the students received tuition assistance from JPTA or Pell grants (Ferrian 1985).

At the time of this writing it was too early to assess the placement rate for the bilingual apparel arts program, as it was not yet completed. The instructor reported that most mainstream graduates from the apparel arts class obtained jobs in alteration shops rather than sewing factories, and that the decline in the garment industry had not affected these jobs. Wages in alteration shops were generally better than in factories, and she had already received requests for graduates to fill positions in which they might earn between $4 and $5 an hour in starting wages, although one "notorious" employer was still offering $3.50 an hour. However, the instructor was somewhat concerned about whether refugee women would get alterations jobs because employers might fear that the women would not be able to communicate adequately with customers (Ferrian 1985).

Although it is beyond the time frame of the present study, it should be noted that a second special Hmong women's power sewing class was initiated at St. Paul TVI in early 1986. While the first Hmong class was largely composed of middle-aged women, the second class included mainly young women who had recently completed high school programs in St. Paul or were still in high school and attended the power sewing class after school. In both classes, most of the women were married and had children. Some of the younger women had not been in the United States very long and had had very little schooling before they arrived. Nevertheless, their English language skills--learned in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in St. Paul's high schools--were considerably better than those of the middle-aged women, many of whom may have had no English language training (Vang, Mai 1986b).

The experience of the bilingual assistant for these programs illustrates the poor economic outcome of training for a place in the garment industry--particularly in terms of advancement--and also illustrates the fact that it is not only women with limited education who have been channeled into this field of training. In an interview in St. Paul in late 1985, the Hmong bilingual assistant said that she had graduated from high school and attended a vocational school for six months in Laos. She had also worked as a secretary in a government office for two years in Vientiane before she and her family fled Laos in 1975. She had studied French in school but did not know any English when she arrived in St. Paul in 1980.

After her arrival in St. Paul this woman and her husband studied for six months in an English language training program for refugees. When her husband, who had learned English in Laos while working for the Americans, transferred to a vocational institute in an eastern suburb of St. Paul, she entered a prevocational program at the same school. There she continued her English language study for five months and then was "sent" to a mainstream vocational program in power sewing.

When her husband transferred to St. Paul TVI, she transferred to the school's mainstream apparel arts program, which included power sewing but also included more advanced commercial sewing skills. After she graduated from this program in December 1982 she went to a refugee employment agency in St. Paul for help in seeking a job. After two months the agency placed her in a job in a Minneapolis sewing factory where she started work at $3.75 per hour. All workers were paid at hourly rates only. If workers wanted to buy medical insurance through the company they were charged $120 a month (probably the entire cost), an amount few could afford to pay.

Because this woman was bilingual and had been trained in the operation of all the machines used in the company's production process, she was asked to serve as the supervisor's assistant soon after she started work. Numerous refugee women who could not speak English and had no training in sewing were also employed by the company, and she was asked to teach them how to operate various machines. She was also asked to translate when the supervisor gave them instructions. However, she was never officially assigned to this job or paid more for it. Instead she was asked each night to perform these tasks. After the first month her pay was raised to $4.25, and after seven months it was raised again to $4.45. It was not until she had worked at the company for two years that her pay reached $5.05, the maximum paid by the company for production workers.

When she was offered a part-time job as bilingual assistant for the Hmong power sewing class at St. Paul TVI in 1983, she was very pleased. She liked teaching, and the pay of $8 an hour was far better than what she earned in the factory. But because it was a part-time job, she had to continue her ten-hour night shift at the factory (in addition to working six hours a day at St. Paul TVI) in order to support her family while her husband completed his vocational training. Moreover, while her teaching job raised the family income considerably, it did not resolve the problem of medical benefits for herself or her family. As a part-time worker she was not eligible for medical benefits at St. Paul TVI, and she could not afford the prohibitive cost of the medical coverage offered at the factory. Therefore, when her third child was born in St. Paul she had to pay $1,145 in cash for the thirteen hours she was in the hospital.

Concerning her work in the sewing factory, this woman expressed the notion, commonly held among Hmong women, that she was not worthy of a better position for her first job. She said that she knew American women do not want sewing jobs because the pay is too low, but many Hmong women believe they should accept a low-paid job first and look for a better job later when they know more English. This viewpoint may stem partly from the low status of women in traditional Hmong culture but also reflects the often repeated admonition to refugees by resettlement workers in Thailand and in the United States to "start at the bottom and work your way up," in the American way.* Unfortunately, this advice leads refugee women to take low-wage jobs that actually have little potential for advancement either within the industry or in another field. It also makes them more vulnerable to exploitation in competitive industries that depend on low-cost labor to increase their profits.

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*See, for example, "The Intensive English as a Second Language and Cultural Orientation Program in Southeast Asia," Cultural Orientation Resource Manual, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1982), 14.1.

On the other hand, the experience of a Khmer woman of forty-four years, interviewed in the 1985-86 bilingual apparel arts program at St. Paul TVI, illustrates the fact that benefits are often obtained from training per se, regardless of the type of skills learned. This woman had five years of elementary education in Cambodia but knew no English when she arrived in St. Paul in 1982. Married to a policeman in Battambang, Cambodia, she had no work experience outside her home. When her husband was executed by Pol Pot's soldiers, she fled the country with three of her four children. At the time of the interview she and her children lived in public housing in St. Paul, and the family was supported by public assistance.

This woman was literate in her own language, and after one and a half years of English language training in St. Paul, she had achieved adequate English language skills to meet the requirements for the bilingual apparel arts program at St. Paul TVI. She had heard about the program from a friend and enrolled because she wanted to get a job.

This woman, like many others, had no idea what kind of wages she could expect to receive in the garment industry or whether medical benefits would be provided. Moreover, because she could not always understand the teacher's instructions in class without help from the assistant, she was worried about understanding instructions on the job. She was also troubled by severe headaches that doctors in St. Paul had not been able to relieve.

While it is unlikely that this woman will be able to provide more than partial support for herself and her family on wages from a garment industry job, the training itself has apparently provided a positive experience that has helped her adapt to her new life in St. Paul while still grieving over the loss of her husband and eldest son (who remained in Cambodia).

This woman made it clear that she looked forward to the class every day. She found that the teacher and assistant were supportive and helpful, and the other women in the program were friendly. She also liked learning to operate industrial sewing machines.

Ironically, while jobs in the garment industry in St. Paul and Minneapolis are among the lowest-paid and most unstable jobs in the metropolitan area, and better jobs in alterations and tailoring are not readily available to refugee women, the training programs in this field continue to be very popular among this group. For many, like the Khmer woman interviewed in the apparel arts class, these programs provide a supportive group experience that plays an important part in their adaptation to their new environment. Sewing programs at St. Paul TVI have lent themselves to this purpose particularly well, as the women have worked together on various tasks, moved about freely in the classroom, and interacted with teachers, assistants, and other students.

Neither MATC nor St. Paul TVI provided child care assistance for refugee women in employment training programs. However, in both Wisconsin and Minnesota, child care was available to public assistance recipients attending training sessions.

Brown Group (Tempco) Industrial Sewing Training Project
Seattle, Washington, 1983-85

In late 1982 Tempco Quilters Inc., a sewing enterprise in Seattle, was purchased by a larger national corporation, Brown Group, Inc. The new management decided to expand production in the Seattle plant and to consolidate its Western outer-garment production at Tempco. Additional space was added at the plant and plans were made to increase the number of sewers from 100 to 350 by late 1985. In the summer of 1983 the sewing line supervisor approached the regional director of World Relief, a voluntary agency involved with refugee resettlement, regarding the possibility of training Southeast Asian refugee women to fill the new positions. Subsequent negotiations between the company and the Voluntary Roundtable of Washington, a local consortium of refugee resettlement agencies, resulted in the submission of a grant proposal for federal funding for a cooperative training program through TAP (see part 2). The project received a total of $98,760 in TAP funding for the training of 120 refugee women in six classes during the first year of operation, beginning in late 1983 and extending to late 1984. Unspent monies from the first year were combined with additional TAP funding in 1985 to train forty more women in two classes beginning in January and extending to April 1985 (Hill 1985; Mischke 1985; Edwards 1986; Unseth 1986).

A feature of this sewing program that distinguished it from most others in the field was the fact that the women were trained specifically for a unionized company. All employees were required to become members of the Upholsterers International Union, Local No. 46. The union contract guaranteed workers a minimum wage of $4.30 per hour, although company officials claimed most of the women trained in the program would eventually earn more than this by working at piece rates. The average wage expected was $5.11 per hour. Each worker was provided a paid vacation after one year, and overtime pay at one and a half times her average rate. Each worker was also provided medical insurance through the union, for which the company paid $119 and the worker paid $3.50 a month. This contract offered far more equitable pay and benefits than refugee women have generally received in sewing factories. However, the contract also allowed the company to lay off workers, and prohibited strikes and picketing by the workers. Therefore, refugee women working at the Seattle plant were still subject to the frequent layoffs common to jobs in the secondary labor market (Brown Group 1985).

Two different voluntary agencies were involved in administering the project--the Washington Council of Churches in late 1983 and 1984, and World Relief in 1985. The TAP grant covered the employment of a staff person to serve as project director and instructor for English language training and orientation to the American work place. The grant also covered the rental of training space and sewing machines from Brown Group, and the purchase of two hours a day of the company trainer's time. Bus passes and child care assistance were also provided for the women in training. For its part, Brown Group agreed to hire 80 percent of the women trained (Mischke 1985).

TAP grants received by the project were performance-based, fixed-price contracts with specific eligibility requirements. Project goals had to be met in order to receive full funding for the project. These included the enrollment of a minimum of twenty women in each class, with eighteen completing the course, and the placement of sixteen in full-time, permanent (30 days or more), unsubsidized employment. Only refugees living in King County who were unemployed, underemployed, or on public assistance were eligible. The first contract covered the six classes conducted in late 1983 and 1984. The second covered two additional classes in 1985. All the training goals and eligibility requirements were satisfactorily met under both contracts (Mischke 1985).

Additional guidelines for the selection of project trainees stipulated that approximately 70 percent had to be residents of Seattle and 30 percent of King County outside Seattle, and 15 percent had to be youth from sixteen to twenty-one years. The ethnic ratio of the classes was required to reflect that of the local refugee population: 22 percent Vietnamese, 20 percent ethnic Chinese, 23 percent Khmer, 15 percent Lowland Lao, 10 percent Highland Lao, and 10 percent non-Southeast Asian refugees. The effort to abide by these guidelines met with varying degrees of success, undoubtedly depending to some extent on the number of women from each category that applied (Mischke 1985; Unseth 1986).

In the case of the seventh class, observed by the author in February 1985, the ratio of participants living in Seattle and King County met the goals of the guidelines. The ages of the women ranged from twenty-one to forty-five, but only 5 percent were youth (sixteen to twenty-one years of age), 5 percentage points below the goal. The ethnic ratio of the group, moreover, departed considerably from the goals stated in the guidelines. The largest proportion of the women were Lowland Lao, Khmer, and ethnic Chinese. Vietnamese trainees represented only 15 percent, 7 percentage points below the goal, while Lowland Lao women represented 30 percent, 15 percentage points higher than the goal. Khmer women totaled 25 percent, 2 percentage points above the guideline goals, and ethnic Chinese women met the goal at 20 percent for their group. Only 5 percent were Highland Lao women (Hmong and Mien), 5 percentage points below the goal (Mischke 1985). This may indicate that those with the most education, generally the Vietnamese, were less interested in training for industrial sewing jobs in early 1985, while Highland Lao women, the least educated and the least likely to have had experience in industrial sewing in Southeast Asia, had difficulty meeting the educational requirements for enrolling in the program.

The fifty refugee women who applied for the twenty slots in the seventh class, conducted in January and February 1985, were tested in both written and oral English skills. They were also interviewed to obtain information about their family situation and to find out whether or not they had previous experience in industrial sewing. Those with good English language skills and previous experience in the industry were given high priority.

The class was trained over a period of about eight weeks. The program consisted of six hours per day of work-related English language training and orientation to the work place, as well as training and practice in operating industrial sewing machines. On the day the program was observed, the first hour of the English class was focused on filling out application forms for employment at Brown Group, and an explanation of the company's agreement with the Upholsterers International Union, Local No. 46. The teacher emphasized the fact that all the employees would get medical insurance through the union, and that the company would pay $119 a month for each employee, while the latter would pay only $3.50 a month. She also explained W-2 forms, which were quite puzzling to those who had never been employed. Those who had prior work experience took an active part in explaining the forms to those who did not understand them.

The second hour of the English class was devoted largely to role playing, in anticipation of communication problems that might arise on the job. Working together in pairs, the women entered into this activity with enthusiasm, some taking the part of the supervisor and others taking the part of workers. Special emphasis was given to asking for help when they did not understand instructions, and calling in sick.

At the end of the class the teacher announced the names of students who had been selected by the company trainer to begin work the following week. While most of the women named appeared to be pleased, one woman was clearly frightened by the prospect of beginning work in the factory, and asked if she might stay in the class and learn a little more before going to work. The teacher responded to the woman with positive encouragement, reassuring her that if the trainer had chosen her she would be able to do the work adequately. She also reminded her how much money she would be earning as an employee of Brown Group.

Following the English class the women received two hours of instruction in the use of industrial sewing machines, in a setting similar to that in which they would be working after completing the training period. In contrast to the supportive approach of the English teacher, however, the method of the trainer, a Vietnamese woman, tended to be authoritarian, and the refugee women took a passive role in her class. Cultural and methodological conflicts had arisen between the American teachers and the Southeast Asian trainer since the beginning of the program, resulting in a high turnover of English teachers (Mischke 1985; Unseth 1986).

Recruiting for the eighth class, conducted in March and April 1985, proved to be more difficult than for the previous classes. Project staff viewed this as a sign that more alternatives in training for refugee women were opening up in Seattle. Nevertheless a class was formed, and an additional staff person was hired to serve as a liaison between teachers and students throughout the day, in an attempt to resolve some of the conflicts that had arisen earlier over teaching methods. However, during the second month of the program, Brown Group was sold, and the new management was not interested in hiring the trainees due to a slump in business. A job developer was hired to place the last class of trainees in jobs elsewhere, and the program was terminated in April 1985 as a result of this unexpected development. One-hundred-sixty refugee women had been trained in eight classes, and with the exception of the last class, about 80 percent of each class were employed by Brown Group.

TRAINING FOR THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY

The electronics industry provides another example of a competitive, labor-intensive industry that has employed large numbers of refugee women* in low-skilled, low-paid jobs in the secondary labor market. The electronics industry also illustrates the growing tendency to differentiate between primary and secondary sectors within the same industry. While highly skilled and well-paid engineering or programming positions in the electronics industry are structured to offer opportunities for advancement and job security, the larger proportion of the industry's workers fill low-skilled, low-paid assembly jobs. These jobs offer little potential for advancement, and workers are subject to frequent layoffs. In October 1985 approximately 19.4 percent of all employed refugee women worked in the electronics industry, making work in that industry the most common occupation of refugee women (Bach 1986).

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*Until recently the electronics industry employed primarily women for assembly jobs.

The structure of the electronics industry is also similar to that of the garment industry in respect to the use of the "outwork" system to reduce labor costs and maximize profits. Like the garment industry, the electronics industry subcontracts unskilled production out to plants in low-wage, nonunion areas in the United States or in Third World countries. Furthermore, the electronics industry, like the garment industry, has become increasingly involved in the underground economy, where substantial savings in labor costs and benefits can be made by paying employees in cash--often at less than minimum wage rates--and avoiding payment of required employers' contributions to social security and other benefits (Bach 1984, 84-86).

While a few refugee women with prior education enrolled in training programs for electronics technicians, the largest number enrolled in training for electronics assembly. Educational requirements for the latter are generally slightly higher than for industrial sewing, largely due to the fact that in most companies assembly workers must be able to read blueprints for soldering components onto circuit boards. While industrial sewing was popular among refugee women--particularly those who had never before worked outside of their family home or farm--electronics assembly appears to have had more status in the refugee community, among both men and women. Despite the low pay and instability of electronics assembly jobs, training in the field invariably attracted large numbers of refugees in areas where the industry was concentrated.

Classes in electronics differed considerably from those in sewing. First, electronics classes included both male and female students, and most of the instructors were men. Second, the instructors were often refugees who were advanced students in the field or employees of local electronics companies, and who taught the class bilingually or in the language of the predominant group in the class. Undoubtedly, this made electronics training more accessible to refugees with limited education, a large proportion of whom were women, and facilitated better understanding of the technical concepts involved.

On the other hand, the focus was almost entirely on learning technical skills. The transmission of cultural skills that often occurred in sewing classes with bilingual and bicultural staff, appeared to be minimal in electronics classes. Moreover, while the women often sat together in one part of the electronics class and seemed to develop a sense of cohesiveness, the self-assurance and active participation of women, which was often observed in industrial sewing programs, was not evident in electronics classes.

Of the eight electronics training programs for Southeast Asian refugees initiated in project study sites during the decade from 1975 to 1985, two were established in the Northwest: in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington. Three were established in Orange County, California, an area of concentrated electronics manufacturing. Additional electronics programs were developed in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In Arlington, Virginia, an electronics assembly training program initiated in the early years of resettlement attracted mainly women. Seven of the eight programs were federally funded, and one was state funded.

Bilingual Training in Electronics Assembly

St. Paul, Minnesota, 1983-85

A state-funded bilingual electronics assembly training program was initiated at St. Paul TVI in 1983. The teacher was Hmong and the instruction was in Hmong, Lao, and English. Most of the students were Hmong who had had very limited schooling in Laos but had attended English language training classes after their arrival in St. Paul. The age of the students ranged from twenty to fifty years. About half were women (Vang, Meng 1986).

The electronics assembly classes met for three hours each evening, three times a week, for three months. They included both lectures and laboratory work. Unless non-Hmong students were enrolled, the lectures and instructions were entirely in Hmong. Each student in the class was also required to enroll in English language training focused on vocabulary related to electronics assembly jobs. These classes met twice a week for an additional two hours. Unemployed refugees were generally eligible for Pell grants to cover tuition, but some paid the $250 tuition themselves. Of twenty-one students who enrolled in a bilingual electronics assembly class in the fall of 1985, nineteen completed the course and eleven were placed in jobs. Seven continued in more advanced classes (Vang, Meng 1986; Vang, Mai 1986c; Trejo 1986b).

When asked why she enrolled in the electronics assembly class, a Hmong woman with a high school education, who completed the course in 1985, replied that although she was already employed in another field, she took the course because she might have to change her occupation in a few years, and she wanted to have another skill to fall back on. When asked why other women in the class--most of whom had very little education--enrolled in the course, she replied that electronics paid more than sewing, and these women could not get any other jobs. She also pointed out that although electronics jobs in large companies in St. Paul and Minneapolis paid $4.00 to $4.50 per hour, it had been difficult to obtain these jobs for over a year. Nevertheless, women could still find jobs in small shops that paid only about $3.75 per hour but "pay in cash and take out no tax." She also voiced a common view among refugees that "you won't lose your money on an electronics class" (Vang, Mai 1986c).

Bilingual Training in Electronics

Orange County, California, 1978-85

Electronics training at the Vietnamese Service Center in Orange County was open to all refugees, but because the teachers were Vietnamese and the instruction was in English and Vietnamese, the program was particularly attractive to Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese from Vietnam. Most of the students from Vietnam had completed high school in their homeland, while those from Cambodia and Laos generally had completed elementary school. Usually more women than men were enrolled in electronics assembly courses at the center, while considerably more men than women were enrolled in the more advanced electronics technician training programs (Nguyen 1985).

A TAP-funded electronics assembly class observed at the center in January 1985 met four hours a day, five days a week, for three months. As in the St. Paul classes, these sessions included both lectures and laboratory work. Unlike the St. Paul program, however, electronics courses at the center did not include vocational English language instruction. However, in the classes observed, the teacher's instructions and lectures were always spoken first in English and then in Vietnamese. No provision was made for translation into the languages of those who did not speak Vietnamese. The students included Vietnamese, ethnic Chinese, Lao, and Cambodians, ranging in age from twenty to fifty years. Of the twenty-one enrolled, fourteen were women. The TAP grant covered both the students' tuition and the teacher's wages (Nguyen 1985).

A TAP-funded electronics technician training program observed the same day comprised twenty-two Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese students, ranging in age from twenty to thirty-five years, only five of whom were women. This class also met for four hours a day, five days a week, but extended over a period of six months. The program consisted of lectures in English and Vietnamese, as well as laboratory work, and the students used an English text. No vocational English language training was provided. For the most part the students (mainly the males) took an active part in class discussion (Nguyen 1985).

The teacher said that at the time it took electronics students from one to four months to find jobs, either as technicians or assemblers. Nevertheless, because the center was well known to local electronics companies, the companies usually called the center for references, and graduates of the center's programs had established a good reputation as well-trained and reliable employees. The teacher also noted that because many local companies had defense contracts, United States citizenship was required for their employees, and this barred many refugees from employment (Nguyen 1985).

An interview with one of the five women enrolled in the electronics technician class revealed that, in contrast to many refugee women in lower-level training programs, this woman had very specific information concerning the economic outcome that might be expected from her training. While she recognized the fact that it might take several months to obtain a job, she pointed out that starting wages for technicians were $5 to $7 per hour, and that she could expect 8 percent increases annually to a maximum of about $12 per hour. Moreover, as she pointed out, technician jobs in the area generally provided medical benefits for which the employer paid 85 percent.

This woman of forty-seven years had completed high school and a two-year nursing course in Vietnam, and had also worked as a nurse before she left her homeland. Upon her arrival in the United States she found she could get only the most menial work in hospitals and therefore switched to electronics. Asked if she had taken any other courses during the three years since her arrival, she replied that she had enrolled in English language training for three years and was currently taking an English class at Orange Coast College.

TRAINING FOR THE CLEANING INDUSTRY

The cleaning industry exemplifies still another industry that has employed large numbers of refugee women in low-skilled, low-paid jobs in the secondary labor market. Of the three main types of employment in the field, domestic housecleaning clearly offers the fewest long-term advantages. Jobs in this field provide neither job security nor medical benefits, and afford virtually no potential for advancement. While hourly rates for housecleaning are generally somewhat higher than those for motel work--and housecleaners often are paid in cash--cleaning private homes is usually part-time work. Motel and hotel workers generally are paid at minimum wage levels unless they are unionized, in which case medical benefits may also be provided. The highest-paid and most stable jobs in the industry, janitorial jobs, usually are held by men. Like industrial sewing and electronics assembly jobs, motel and hotel work is subject to seasonal layoffs, and even domestic housecleaning has its slow seasons, particularly in January and February, after the Christmas and New Year holidays. In October 1985, 11.9 percent of all employed refugee women worked as kitchen workers or maids. Another 5 percent of employed refugee women worked as janitors. The percentage of women in cleaning jobs as a separate category is not available; the combined category of kitchen workers and maids represents the third largest occupational group for refugee women (Bach 1986).

Educational and English language requirements for training programs in the cleaning industry were usually low. Most programs employed bilingual assistants either to translate the teacher's instructions or to train refugees in their own language. Some training programs were as short as two weeks, and few were longer than eight weeks. Because these were low-cost programs they were a favorite among administrators of federal funding programs. Among the refugees, however, training in this field never enjoyed the popularity of industrial sewing programs (among some groups) or the status of electronics assembly programs. Most refugee women enrolled in cleaning programs only as a last resort, or to supplement their income on a part-time basis.

Twelve training programs in the cleaning trade were established in project study sites from 1975 to 1985, among them the housecleaning project initiated in the last year of the Seattle Indochinese Women's Program (see pp. 43-47). In the East, training in the cleaning trade was established in Providence, Rhode Island, and Arlington, Virginia. In the Midwest, similar training was provided through two programs in St. Paul, Minnesota, and one each in Minneapolis, Minnesota; Milwaukee and Sheboygan, Wisconsin; and Elgin, Illinois. On the West Coast, one program was developed in Santa Ana, California, and two others in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington. Ten of the twelve programs were federally supported, mainly through TAP funding.

Bilingual Training in Housekeeping
Santa Ana, California, 1984-85

In 1984 and 1985 the United Cambodian Community in Santa Ana, California, sponsored a TAP project that provided training in housekeeping, janitorial services, and gardening. The housekeeping class was designed primarily for women, while the janitorial and gardening courses were for men. However, a few women chose to enroll in the janitorial course because jobs in that field paid higher wages and the training was less difficult than that for cleaning private homes. The program was open to all refugees, but the instruction was in English and Cambodian, and most of the students in the program were Cambodian (Trang 1985; Chey 1985).

According to the assistant director of the United Cambodian Community, an MAA that had only recently established an office in Santa Ana, training in the cleaning and gardening trades was selected for the Cambodian community because it was the only kind of work they were capable of doing, as their educational level was very low. The Cambodians in Santa Ana initially objected to this choice, however. They argued that cleaning was a "low-class" occupation, and asked for training in electronics assembly. Nevertheless, the MAA staff was convinced that the English language skills among those eligible for TAP training was not adequate for electronics assembly (Trang 1985).

Most of the women in the housekeeping program were older, illiterate women from rural Cambodia who had survived the holocaust because the Khmer Rouge viewed them as no threat to the revolution. These women were allowed to leave Cambodia, while younger, educated, urban Cambodians were purged. Many of the women were widows, and virtually all were on public assistance. Project staff said that the women were "forced" by public assistance workers to enroll in training and to seek work (presumably by threats of sanctions). The assistant director described the women as completely lacking in skills and totally unmotivated in terms of seeking employment (Trang 1985).

Cambodian women with similar backgrounds in New York City, Portland, and St. Paul-Minneapolis, were found to be particularly vulnerable to mental health problems resulting from the trauma of the Pol Pot years in Cambodia and resettlement in the United States. In these sites the women were provided with survival English and cultural skills training programs, and some were provided informal counseling. However, the Cambodian women in Santa Ana had apparently remained largely isolated from the larger society around them.* The most important feature of the housecleaning project may have been the lessening of this isolation, although the MAA staff clearly viewed the main goal of the project to be reducing the dependency of the women on public assistance, as stipulated by TAP guidelines. One Cambodian staff member, a graduate student in the United States during the Pol Pot era, said that he was personally "ashamed" by the dependency problem of the uneducated Cambodians but that he did not altogether agree with the federal policy of short-term training as the solution (Trang 1985; Chey 1985).

The women's housekeeping class met for six hours a day for two weeks, supplying a total of sixty hours of training. The first week was devoted to explanations of the use of chemical cleaners and cleaning appliances. During the second week the teacher supervised the trainees' work in housecleaning assignments, in preparation for independent work in the community (Chey 1985).

During an interview in January 1985 the teacher emphasized the fact that teaching this group of Cambodian women meant starting from the very lowest level, as most could not identify a stove or a sink in English when they enrolled. She said that the women were very reluctant to enter the program and resented the MAA for its role in establishing the housekeeping course. Most were fearful of working outside the home and had very little confidence in their ability to comprehend the classroom instruction. Some had no experience in using public transportation. Despite these difficulties, the women eventually began to enjoy the classes and became quite interested in finding out what American homes were like and how they were maintained (Chey 1985).

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*The Orange County Department of Social Services discontinued the funding of cultural orientation classes after ORR issued a directive in 1982 calling for the use of 85 percent of refugee social services funding for services directly related to employment (Hunter-Curtis 1985).

From April to November 1984, thirty-six women were enrolled in the housekeeping program. Thirty of them completed the program and were placed in either full-time or part-time jobs or employed by the MAA's maintenance team. Most of the women employed in housecleaning obtained part-time jobs for $4 to $5 an hour, cleaning homes independently or as part of the team. Their welfare grants were reduced in proportion to the amount they earned. Those who worked full-time in motels were paid the minimum wage rate, $3.35 an hour, and lost their public assistance, including medical benefits (Trang 1985).* While welfare costs were lowered by the program, the economic status of the women and their families was also lowered in some cases and remained about the same for others.

Vocational Housekeeping for Refugee Women

Elgin, Illinois, 1981-85

In the early 1970s the Elgin YWCA initiated an English language training program for Hispanics. When large numbers of Southeast Asian refugees began to arrive in the area in the late 1970s, the program was expanded to meet the needs of this group as well. The first Southeast Asian students were Vietnamese, but within a few years the Lowland Lao became the dominant group in Elgin and in the YWCA programs (Lamp 1984).

In 1981 the YWCA obtained federal funds to enlarge its program to provide vocational training and employment services as well as English language training to the refugees. The first vocational training program established for refugee women was a course in housekeeping, designed to enable the women to find employment in private homes, hotels, hospitals, and nursing homes. In 1984 and 1985 the course was funded by TAP, although United Way funded the child care service provided for refugee women attending training programs (Lamp 1984).

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*Widows and other female heads of households with no children under six years of age are required by AFDC regulations to seek full-time work.

The housekeeping program was offered twice a year, in the spring and fall. It met for two hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks. When the class was observed in early November 1984, the women were practicing the use of cleaning vocabulary by role-playing in a simulated work-place situation. The teacher also explained the use of various cleaning products she had brought to the classroom. Later in the course the women took trips to the teacher's home, where they practiced defrosting the refrigerator, cleaning the oven, and vacuuming. They also visited hotels, hospitals, and nursing homes where they would later seek employment. Although a bilingual assistant was generally employed for the course, in the fall of 1984 all the women enrolled had a high level of English language skills, and an interpreter was not needed. The class was limited to an enrollment of ten (Dean 1984).

Refugee women who got jobs in the cleaning trade in Elgin earned $5 an hour in private homes, $4.50 in motels, and $3.50 to $4.00 in nursing homes or hospitals. However, according to the employment coordinator for the YWCA refugee program, the women preferred factory assembly work, although they earned less in starting wages, which averaged $3.75 to $4.25. A city with numerous light manufacturing industries, Elgin never had serious unemployment, even during the 1982 recession. Most of the refugee women worked in electronics assembly or other assembly plants, and although there were factory layoffs, manufacturing was still the most secure employment available. Eighty percent of the placements made by the employment coordinator (for both men and women) were in factory jobs (Barauski 1984).

Most of the women who accepted employment in cleaning obtained jobs in motel cleaning, which made up about 15 percent of the total placements. Despite the fact that hourly rates were higher for cleaning in private homes, refugee women preferred working in motels. In 1984 only one refugee woman worked full-time in housecleaning, although a few more worked part-time in this field. Of the twenty women trained in the housekeeping class each year, about fifteen became full-time motel cleaners, one or two moved away, and the remaining three or four became part-time housecleaners (Barauski 1986).

Many of the women working part-time in housecleaning were members of households nearing the end of their eighteen-month eligibility for public assistance. Others lived in households that were not on public assistance but had spouses who worked full-time. Widows receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) who had children over six years of age generally did not work as part-time housecleaners because most of their earnings would be deducted from their grant. Virtually all who worked part-time cleaning private homes viewed this work as temporary and quit these jobs when better jobs became available in factories or motels (Barauski 1986).

A Lao woman interviewed in April 1985 at the Elgin YWCA had completed the housekeeping class but did not want to obtain employment until her children were older. A widow with two children, nine and eleven years old, she was reluctant to work full-time and leave them without supervision when they returned home from school. Moreover, moving from AFDC to full-time or part-time employment in a secondary labor market job would lower her economic status.

As a child in Laos, this woman had grown up in a family of farm workers who lived in the city but went to the countryside to work during the rice-planting and harvesting seasons. She and her siblings went to school in the city but helped their parents in the fields on days off from school and during the summer. This woman attended school for four years. She fled Laos with her husband and children in 1975, but her husband died in Thailand.

After she settled in Elgin in the early 1980s, this woman enrolled in two programs at the Elgin YWCA: a basic literacy class and the housekeeping course. She explained that her social worker wanted her to get a job as soon as possible because both her children were over six years of age. The worker sent her to a CETA job club. She liked going to this class, but it did not help her very much because it was all in English and there was no translator. After the woman had surgery her social worker agreed she should stay home for a while to recuperate.

For this woman with limited education and English language skills, it would be very difficult--if not impossible--to support her family on a low-skilled, low-wage job in the secondary labor market, such as motel cleaning. Even if she earned $4.50 an hour for ten months out of the year (allowing for layoffs in January and February) she would have an annual income of only $7,920.

TRAINING IN CHILD CARE

While some features of employment in child care are characteristic of jobs in the secondary labor market, others are characteristic of the primary labor market. As for most work in the secondary market, starting wages are low, ranging from $3.50 to $5.00. Moreover, in areas such as Santa Ana, California, employers have increasingly tended to hire part-time child care workers, in order to avoid paying benefits.

On the other hand, employment in kindergartens and child care centers is generally stable. Self-employed child care providers often work intermittently, although the number of clients might be stable for a few months at a time. This often was the case, for example, when refugee parents were enrolled in English language or employment training. Theoretically, advancement in this field is also possible. In California, a teacher's aide might become a teacher in a private kindergarten by earning six credits in early childhood education in a community college.

Training programs for child care varied considerably. While some offered only the most basic instruction necessary for licensing of home-based child care providers, others offered instruction in a wide range of topics including child development, early education, nutrition, health, safety, and emergency procedures. Also included in the more extensive training programs was instruction in bookkeeping, small business management skills, and the filing of tax forms. Prerequisites for entering the programs were generally flexible. The participants in child care programs that were observed for the present study ranged from women with very limited education to those who had completed elementary or high school in Southeast Asia.

The number of refugee women trained in child care from 1975 to 1985 was relatively small. Six training programs in child care were available in four of the ten main study sites. Four of the six programs were federally funded, one was state funded, and one was supported by a private foundation grant. In Arlington County, Virginia, the Indochinese Cooperative Refugee Education Program--one of the five federally funded pilot training programs initiated for the first wave of refugees--provided a course in occupational child care from 1977 to 1979. This was one of the very few early classes that was oriented toward women. Vocational training was discontinued in Arlington County after 1981, in keeping with ORR's policy of early employment, but when TAP funds became available in 1984, Arlington's Refugee Education and Employment Program (the successor to the Indochinese Cooperative Refugee Education Program) offered a class in home-based child care (Mansoor 1984; Schuman 1984, 1986).

In 1982 a training program in family day care was initiated for refugee women in St. Paul, Minnesota, by Family Service of Greater St. Paul. Funded by a private foundation, this program continued through 1984. In 1983 and 1984 the Lakeshore Technical Institute established state-funded home-based child care training for refugee women in Sheboygan. In 1984 a federally funded state-wide Secondary Wage Earners Project in Wisconsin established child care training in Milwaukee; and in Orange County, California, TAP-funded child care training was provided by Lao Family Community and the Vietnamese Service Center.

In Home Child Care Training

Sheboygan, Wisconsin, 1983-84

Most of the English language and employment training for the predominantly Hmong refugee population in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, was provided by the Lakeshore Technical Institute (LTI) in nearby Cleveland, and LTI's Adult Learning Center in Sheboygan. While English language training was available at all levels, prior to enrolling in vocational courses refugees were required to attend a prevocational course that prepared them in English and math skills, job seeking, and basic vocational skills in a cluster of related employment fields. Even enrollment in this prevocational course required an English language level difficult for many Hmong refugees to attain, and relatively few Hmong women qualified for the course. Those who took the course were channeled into prevocational skills training in the home economics field, a program that included six weeks of sewing, six weeks of child care, four weeks of housecleaning, and two weeks of laundry. Following the prevocational course, many students entered mainstream vocational training programs (Long 1984; Vue 1984).

The In Home Child Care Training program offered in 1983 and 1984 was an exception to this established program. Initiated jointly by LTI, the Sheboygan County Department of Social Services, and the Hmong MAA in Sheboygan, the program was designed to meet a need for child care for children of refugees enrolled in English language and employment training, and to provide training for self-employment in home-based child care for Hmong women. LTI sponsored the course in a child care center in central Sheboygan, and supplied the instructor and materials, and the Department of Social Services was responsible for certification of child care providers after they had completed the course. The Hmong MAA supplied the interpreter for the course and paid the $6 tuition fee for each participant (Vreeke 1986b; Pontar 1986).

A total of forty women, twenty to sixty years of age, were trained in the In Home Child Care Training program, which was offered twice. Many of the participants were older women who already cared for the children of their extended family without compensation; a larger number were young and middle-aged women. While virtually all the women were eager to learn about child development and to find out about American child-rearing methods, most were not interested in becoming certified for home-based child care, for reasons that will be discussed later. Of the forty trained, only six were certified following the completion of the courses (Lewin 1984; Cha 1984).

The In Home Child Care Training class met for six two-hour sessions, providing a total of twelve hours of training. The training took place in the evening at Children's House, a child care center accessible to the Hmong community. The instructor was the director of Children's House, and while the children were not there in the evening for practical experience, the women had the opportunity to examine books, puzzles, and games at the center, and to try out the toys described as appropriate for a specific age group. There was no screening of applicants for the program, and nobody was turned away (Pontar and Stone 1984).

The curriculum was adapted from a videotaped mainstream program. The visual component was used without the sound, and the instructor presented simplified lectures, translated by the interpreter, to accompany the visual materials. Topics of instruction included child development, health, sanitation, first aid and emergency procedures, safety, and nutrition. Following the presentations the women were encouraged to ask questions and to discuss the differences between Hmong and American child-rearing methods. The women also received practical training in taking temperatures, preparing snacks appropriate to preschool children, and planning simple handwork activities. Record-keeping and completing tax forms were touched on only briefly in the course instruction, but the women did receive technical assistance and translation services for taking the final test, undergoing medical examinations, preparing for home inspections, and completing application forms for county certification (Pontar and Lichterman 1980; Vreeke 1986a).

The six women who became certified home-based child care providers were paid by the County Department of Social Services to care for children of AFDC parents while they attended English language and employment training classes. County regulations restricted each woman to caring for not more than three children under seven years of age, including her own children, and three children over the age of seven, not including her own. The Department of Social Services paid the women $1.15 an hour for each child for children under two, and $1.00 an hour for each child for children over two (Vreeke 1986b). Therefore, if a woman had two children of her own under seven and one over seven, and took in one additional child under two and three children over seven, she would earn $4.15 per hour, comparable to most secondary labor market jobs in the area. However, since AFDC clients generally attended classes for only part of the day, home-based child care was usually part-time.

An interview with the Hmong interpreter for the In Home Child Care Training program revealed that most of the women who took the course (like the Lao women who took the Elgin YWCA's housekeeping class) were not willing to take low-wage jobs that could not support a family because they were on AFDC and were afraid of losing their eligibility for public assistance and medical benefits. However, some of the women wanted to take the training so they could use this skill in child care to find a job when their children were older (and the family was no longer eligible for AFDC).

On the other hand, the interpreter pointed out that the training experience had benefited the women in several ways. Not only had they learned about health, safety, and child development, but they had also absorbed something about American preschool teachers' and parents' expectations for children at various age levels. For the older women, who bear the main responsibility of child care in the Hmong community and have limited contact with Americans, the class was an important acculturation experience.

The interpreter's own experience, on the other hand, suggests that refugee women who manage to achieve a higher level of child care training might be able to use this training in a variety of ways but still would not be likely to earn more than $5 an hour, a standard wage in the field. In a 1984 interview with the author, this woman pointed out that she had no schooling as a child in Laos. When she arrived in California as a young teenager in 1976 she was thrust into mainstream junior high school classes. Although she struggled through high school classes for several years in California and Wisconsin she never received a diploma. However, she did learn enough English and math to quality for the prevocational course at LTI, where she studied child care for six weeks as part of the basic vocational skills training in the field of home economics. Following her completion of the prevocational course, she enrolled in a mainstream child care course at LTI, and achieved certification as a child care aide, which qualified her to work in a child care center.

At the time of the interview this woman was married and had three young children, and had also worked for a year as a translator and outreach worker for the Hmong MAA in Sheboygan. When the In Home Child Care Training program was developed by LTI, she was sent by the Hmong MAA to serve as interpreter, a job she was well qualified for because of her training in the child care field. While she was underpaid by the Hmong MAA at $4.50 per hour, her experience as a translator, combined with her training in child care, might enable her to get a slightly higher-paid job in a child care center or school serving mainstream and refugee children (particularly in an area of concentrated resettlement). Nevertheless, as a child care worker this woman would be unlikely to earn much more than $5 an hour.

Child Care Training at Lao Family Community's Child Care Center
Orange County, California, 1984-85

Lao Family Community (LFC), a Hmong MAA established in Orange County, California, in the late 1970s, has provided most of the employment training for the Hmong population in the county. In 1981 LFC received a contract for the management of a state-funded child care center in Orange County and subsequently began to train Hmong women to serve as teacher's aides at the center. In 1983 and 1984 the center, known as the Lao Family Community Child Care Center, received TAP funding for a child care training program, including training for both home-based child care providers and teacher's aides for child care centers, churches, Head Start programs, and public and private kindergartens. This training was open to all refugee women (Thao 1985).

The TAP project provided training for four classes of refugee women, comprising mainly Vietnamese, Hmong, and Cambodians. Many of the women were referred to the program by the Refugee Employment Assistance Program (REAP), an agency of the Orange County AFDC Program. These women were largely heads of households required by AFDC rules to seek full-time work. Many were older women in their late fifties and early sixties, who were referred to the child care program because they had back and eye problems that precluded sending them to housecleaning or electronics assembly programs. Some were resentful of being "forced" to enroll in the program and initially expressed negative feelings about child care as an occupation. At the start of the program all the women referred by REAP were accepted in the program, although subsequently a screening process was developed and women with little or no potential for success in the program were referred back to REAP. The staff of the program also recruited additional women of all ages through posters in clinics and notices accompanying public assistance checks (Lucht, Eileen 1985; Gray-Blair 1985).

Each class was trained for nine hours a day, five days a week, over a period of three months. Enrollment was staggered due to delays in referrals and recruitment, and women were trained at several levels throughout the course. These levels also reflected the differing certification goals among the participants. Those with very limited English language skills were encouraged to become certified as home-based child care providers. Those with higher levels of language skills and education were urged to seek certification as teacher's aides in schools and child care centers (Gray-Blair 1985).

During part of the day the women gained practical experience by assisting in group activities at the child care center, including singing, games, and handwork. During the remainder of the day the women attended lectures and demonstrations. Generally, the women who knew English best translated for others who did not completely understand the lectures. While this worked well for the most part, during the class observed in January 1985, a lone Cambodian woman appeared to be missing most of the lecture, as there was no one available to translate for her. Child care for women participating in the program was provided without charge, and those on AFDC were paid a stipend of $5 a day while they were enrolled (Lucht, James 1985; Gray-Blair 1985).

The program participants studied subjects similar to those presented in the child care training program in Sheboygan, including child development, health and safety, nutrition, and emergency measures. In Orange County these topics were covered in considerably more detail during the longer training period, and information on child abuse was also included (Lucht, Eileen 1985). When the class was observed in early 1985, the teacher appeared to be very resourceful in adapting the material to the varying educational levels of the women in the class. For example, in talking about the different stages of child development, she linked each stage to games appropriate to that age group--games the women had already participated in with the children.

A job counselor also provided the women with excellent instruction in seeking and keeping jobs. This included discussion of various alternatives for women with child care training, as well as instruction on effective ways to look for job openings, telephone manners, completing application forms, and accepting or rejecting job offers. Most important, the women gained experience in talking with prospective employers through mock interviews with staff members. These were followed by critiques of the interviews and suggestions on important points to make in answering certain commonly asked questions (Gray-Blair 1985).

The observed class was made up of seven women, five of whom were between forty-six and fifty-eight years of age. The two younger women were thirty-eight and twenty-eight years of age. Four of the women were Vietnamese. Of these, only one had completed high school, while another had some high school education, and two had five years of education. An ethnic Chinese woman in the class had attended a Chinese school in Vietnam for three years, and a young Hmong woman had eight years of schooling and one year of training in nursing in Laos. A Cambodian woman of fifty-one years had no education. All except one of the women were heads of households and had been referred to the program by REAP.

A Vietnamese woman interviewed at the LFC Child Care Training Program had arrived in California in March 1984, under the auspices of the Amerasian Children's Program, although her American husband had not yet been located. A woman of thirty-eight years, she was head of a household on AFDC. She had studied English in high school in Vietnam and had also taught kindergarten in her homeland. In addition she had worked as a cashier and bookkeeper at a U.S. Air Force base during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This woman, who had more education than most women in the program, planned to continue her education on a part-time basis in order to achieve certification for teaching in a private kindergarten.

The TAP Review Panel in Orange County denied refunding to the LFC Child Care Training Program--and to most refugee women's training programs in the county--for the following year. In deciding which projects would be funded by TAP in 1985 and 1986, the panel eliminated low-skilled, low-paid training such as housekeeping and child care, and approved training for jobs which required more educational background and English language skills and which paid higher wages. This decision was made without providing alternative employment training or basic education programs for refugees with low skill levels, the largest number of whom are women (Hunter-Curtis 1985).

The rationale for this change in funding policy in Orange County was based on several considerations. The first was the conclusion by panel members that low-skilled, low-paid jobs did not get families off public assistance. The second was the fact that AFDC regulations mandated the head of household to seek training and employment. Since a majority of refugee AFDC families were headed by men, the panel concluded the focus should be on male-oriented training for high-paid jobs (Hunter-Curtis 1985). This is a clear example of federally funded refugee training policy--determined at the county level--based solely on the goal of reducing the costs of welfare regardless of the needs of the clients. This example also shows the adverse effects of AFDC regulations on training policy affecting refugee women.

TRAINING IN HEALTH CARE

The field of health care is one of the few occupations accessible to Southeast Asian refugee women that has clearly afforded employment in the primary labor market. The work is stable, and the channels for advancement from lower to higher levels of skill and status are well established. Starting annual earnings for refugee women trained in nursing have ranged from $14,000 for nursing assistants to $22,000 for Bachelor of Science degree nurses.

Refugee training in health care has generally included both women and men, although women have made up a majority of the participants. While efforts have been made to screen participants to assure their success in the programs, a surprising number of women with no schooling prior to their arrival in the United States have completed training programs in health care at the lower levels. Some programs have enrolled students who were predominately AFDC clients in full-time day classes, while others have scheduled all classes in the evenings and weekends to accommodate working men and women.

Training in this field has not only provided stable, well-paid jobs for refugee women and men, but has also played a part in providing greater cultural sensitivity in medical care for refugees. Until recently, hospitals and clinics have depended entirely upon interpreters for communication between health care professionals and patients. While some interpreters have been well trained and others had medical experience in Southeast Asia, physicians and hospital administrators have increasingly called for the training of bilingual health care practitioners to deal with patients on a day-to-day basis and to help bridge the gap between Southeast Asian and American concepts of health care.

While the number of health care training programs for refugees has been very limited, the seven initiated in project study sites from 1975 to 1985 have ranged from a Health Services Work Experience* program in Orange County, California, to an Associate Degree Nursing course in Providence, Rhode Island. Training at intermediate levels has included Nursing Assistant courses offered in Orange County and Providence; Licensed Practical Nursing programs in Oakland, California, and Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota; and a Community Health Advocate training program in Seattle. Six of the seven programs were federally funded, three by the Refugee Health Professional/Paraprofessional Retraining Program, and three by TAP. The remaining program was supported by state educational funds.

Southeast Asian Health Training Program

Providence, Rhode Island, 1982-85

The Flanagan campus of the Community College of Rhode Island has provided health care training for Southeast Asian refugees in Providence and the surrounding area since 1982. In the latter year a special Southeast Asian Health Training Program was initiated at the request of the Rhode Island Office of Refugee Resettlement and the Providence Mental Health Center. Under this program within the College's Nursing and Allied Health Programs, special classes and support services were provided for Southeast Asian students in the Associate Degree Nursing, Medical Laboratory Technology, and Licensed Practical Nursing courses of study. The program was supported primarily by state educational funds, but CETA funds provided for an additional full-time nursing faculty member to work with the Southeast Asian students, and for a stipend of $100 a week to cover some of the students' living expenses. The students also received financial aid from the college to cover tuition and books (Dwyer 1984).

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*Work Experience programs generally provide minimal training followed by work in the field (often at less than minimum wages) to gain experience in the work place.

Following the screening of applicants, twelve students (four women and eight men) entered the preparatory course in English and mathematics during the summer of 1982. All began full-time study in the two-year program in the fall. At mid-term, however, after an evaluation of the program by faculty and students, it was agreed that the pace of the course was too rapid for the Southeast Asian students because of language and cultural barriers, and that a longer time would be needed to accumulate the credits necessary to graduate. A change in the curriculum made it possible for students to take fewer courses each semester, and the program was extended from two to three years. By the summer of 1984, five of the twelve students had left the program, largely for financial reasons, as most had families to support. Of the seven that remained, three transferred to the Practical Nursing Program. All seven completed the program by the summer of 1985 (Dwyer 1984).

The second class of students entering the program benefited in many ways from the experience of faculty and students during the first year. The twenty students (twelve women and eight men) who entered the program in the fall of

1983 participated in a preparatory course that was extended to a full semester, and more support was provided throughout the year. However, stipends for living expenses were not available to the second year class, and this increased financial pressures on this group. Nevertheless, retention rate was far better than for the first class, and by the summer of 1984 sixteen were performing satisfactorily and fifteen planned to continue. Those who dropped out pointed to both financial and family problems as the reason for not continuing in the program (Dwyer 1984).

By June 1986 eleven students from the first and second classes--six women and five men--had graduated from the program. These included four associate degree nurses, five licensed practical nurses, one respiratory therapist, and one lab technician. All found employment, with starting salaries ranging from $14,000 to $16,000 (Xiong, Su 1986; Higgins 1986).

In December 1983 a federally funded bilingual vocational training program was initiated at the college. It included a course for nursing assistants that trained refugees to do tasks that would be performed under the supervision of a registered nurse in hospitals and nursing homes. The program extended from December 1983 to June 1984, and all classes were scheduled for evening and weekend hours. The students were recruited by the bilingual counselor for the program, and most were employed in full-time jobs. Twelve students enrolled in the program, including nine women and three men. All the students completed the program and were placed in jobs related to their training. Four of these later entered the Associate Degree Nursing program at the college (Dionne 1984; Dionne 1986).

This program served as a model for a TAP-funded Nursing Assistant Training Program operated by the college during the summer of 1984. Twelve refugees, all on public assistance, enrolled in this twenty-two week course. Four of the participants withdrew from the course, but five women and three men completed their studies successfully. Although placement of this group was more difficult than for the earlier students--due largely to lack of self-confidence regarding their own ability--eventually all were placed in nursing assistant jobs. Their earnings averaged $14,000 a year (Dionne 1986).

In both the Nursing Assistant Training Programs some of the women admitted to the program had no schooling in their homeland but were able to complete the course successfully. In one case the interviewer screening applicants for the earlier program was undecided whether or not to accept a young Hmong woman with no prior schooling and only limited English language skills. The interviewer finally decided to allow her to enroll because the woman was extremely persistent in her appeal to be admitted, which seemed to reflect very high motivation. This woman was working full-time and caring for two young children when she entered the program. The course was, in fact, very difficult for her, and eventually she had to quit her job (her husband was employed) to keep up with the class. Nevertheless, this woman completed the course satisfactorily and received an award as the student who achieved "the most improvement" at her graduation. Subsequently she obtained a job as a nursing assistant at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence (Dionne 1984; Dionne 1986).

Refugee Health Training Program
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, 1984-86

Although trained refugee bilingual health interpreters had been available to hospitals and clinics in Minneapolis and St. Paul since 1980, by 1983 physicians and hospital administrators were calling for the training of bilingual health practitioners as a more practical long-term solution to the continuing communication problems with Southeast Asian patients and the need to provide culturally sensitive health care for Southeast Asian patients. In

September 1983, the University of Minnesota and the American Refugee Committee, a Minnesota-based non-profit organization, submitted a joint proposal to the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement for a training grant under the Refugee Health Professional/Paraprofessional Retraining Program (RHPPRP). The proposed project, one of five funded, received a total of $91,000 for the training of thirty-five refugees as nurses, nurse-midwives, and physicians' assistants over a period of one year. Additional federal funds and a grant from a private foundation were made available to the project later, when it became necessary to extend the time to permit students to complete requirements (List and Deinard 1986; ORR 1984a, 56).

A total of one-hundred-five Southeast Asian refugees initially expressed an interest in the Refugee Health Training program in Minneapolis and St. Paul. All were interviewed and had an opportunity to discuss the difficulties in obtaining licensure, their past experience in health care, and their educational background. Of this group, sixty-five were still interested in enrolling in the program after the interviews and were given the Minnesota Battery English language tests. Forty-eight of these were enrolled in the program and began a one-month preparatory course in January 1984 (List 1986).

A special Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program for the refugees was designed by the Minneapolis Technical Institute (MTI). In April 1984 thirty-two students, about half of whom were women, began the progam, taking one hour of English and three hours of technical coursework per evening, four nights a week. Clinical work started midway through the first quarter and was held on weekends. The curriculum was the same as that used in mainstream LPN classes, but the lectures were simplified and medical terms were written on the blackboard (Marston and Hansen 1985, 32, 33).

At the end of the first quarter it became apparent that those students with higher levels of English language skills were progressing at a more rapid rate than the others. A few in the slower group were told they could not continue, but could transfer to a three-week home health care aide training program. The staff also recognized the fact that the heavy schedule of classes every evening and clinical work on weekends was causing stress and fatigue among the students, most of whom were working full-time and also had families to care for. The schedule was modified to include clinical work on Thursday evenings and alternating Friday evenings or Saturday. This change meant that the program would extend over a period of at least one and half years, rather than the one year initially planned (Marston and Hansen 1985, 32).

Sixteen students graduated from the LPN program at MTI. Ten were women and six were men. Eleven in the first class graduated in October 1985 and took the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Examination a week after graduation, without any special preparation. Only two passed, both of whom were women. In April 1986, three more from the first class passed the examination, and these were all men. While waiting to repeat the examination, most worked as nursing assistants, a position for which all had earned certification in the course of the LPN program (Jachman 1986b).

The remaining five students from the second class also took the examination soon after they graduated in April 1986. None of this group passed, but all have been working as nursing assistants or in other jobs while waiting to try again. The nursing examinations are very difficult for Southeast Asian students because of language problems and because the tests are timed (Jachman 1986a).

Another LPN program in the same project was initiated in February 1985, at the St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute. Thirty-eight students started the class, about half of whom were women. At the time of this writing, sixteen remain in the class, including ten women and six men, all of whom are expected to graduate in September 1986. While these figures represent an attrition rate of 58 percent, program staff pointed out that the dropout rate for mainstream LPN classes at the school was also high, averaging about 40 percent, and those mainstream students rarely worked full-time while attending school full-time, as most of the refugees did (Nardi 1986).

At this writing, it is too early to assess the employment outcomes of the programs in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The three male MTI students who passed their examinations in April 1986 have only recently received their test results and begun to look for jobs. One of the two women who passed the examinations in October 1985 obtained a position as an LPN and interpreter for the Social Services and Nursing Services departments of the University of Minnesota Hospitals. Her starting wage was $9 an hour, or almost $19,000 a year. The other woman was forced to postpone employment due to pregnancy complications (Jachman 1986b).

The first student in the program to obtain an LPN position was a young Hmong woman who attended six years of elementary school in Laos during the war years before she fled with her family to Thailand in 1976. Following resettlement in Moultrie, Georgia, she attended a vocational school for five months before taking a job and continued English language training in the evenings after she started working. When she moved to Minneapolis with her family in 1980, a friend told her about an opening for an interpreter at the Minneapolis Health Department. She obtained the job the day after her arrival, and later heard about the training program from Health Department staff members (Thao 1984).

The Refugee Licensed Vocational Nursing Project

Oakland, California, 1984-85

Another RHPPRP program, initiated in January 1984 by Laney College in Oakland, California, provides some useful comparisons to the Minneapolis-St. Paul program. Funded by ORR at nearly $110,000, the program initially enrolled twenty-three refugees, about half of whom were women. All the students were on public assistance, and classes were held during daytime hours.

This group of students, like those at MTI, were divided into two levels according to their academic progress. All in the more advanced group of five women and one man graduated in January 1985 and passed the state licensing examinations in March. Five obtained full-time jobs and one took a part-time job by choice. A Vietnamese woman got a job as a nurse for the newborn nursery in a large magnet hospital. This hospital rarely employed Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN) but made an exception because of this woman's excellent credentials and the fact that the hospital served a large refugee clientele. Another woman got a job at the Asian Health Service, which serves Asian immigrants and Southeast Asian refugees. This woman also enrolled in an RN program for further study. The program's only man obtained a position as a ward clerk at San Francisco General Hospital, in an Asian Psychiatric Unit. All of this group obtained starting wages of between nine and eleven dollars an hour, or between $19,000 and $23,000 a year (Boyer 1986).

Four students in the less advanced group, which included only one woman, graduated in June 1985. The woman was the only one of the group to pass the state examinations on the first attempt. She received several job offers to be an LVN. The three men tried again in November and failed again, largely due to language problems. On the third try, one passed and found a job as an LVN. Of the two that did not pass, one got a job as a medical interpreter, while the other entered a training program in business skills--making him the only graduate not to find work in the health care field (Boyer 1986). Two additional students needed more time and were expected to graduate in June 1986. Twelve of the original twenty-three completed the program.

The director of this program observed that while the attrition rate for the program was 48 percent, the mainstream LVN students at Laney College had attrition rates of up to 50 percent. She also pointed to the fact that those women who successfully completed the program provided much-needed role models for young girls and teenagers in the refugee community (Boyer 1986).

Two important differences existed between the Minneapolis-St. Paul program and that in Oakland. The first was that the students in Oakland were not working full-time in jobs while also attending school full-time, as the students in Minneapolis and St. Paul were. Secondly, the students in Oakland attended mainstream classes, supplemented by special tutorials. They also had considerably more time in clinic work than did the students in Minneapolis and St. Paul (Boyer 1985).

The fact that all the students in Oakland were on public assistance may have been a factor in its lower attrition rate, and undoubtedly was a factor in the degree of stress experienced by students. Nevertheless, during interviews with the author in Oakland in February 1985, several women students mentioned family stress as a serious problem, much of it arising from their spouses' refusal to take any responsibility for domestic chores.

TRAINING IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

While many Southeast Asian refugee women enrolled in mainstream business management courses or participated in workshops designed to train refugees in Western business practices, few refugee women from the highlands of Laos had adequate English language skills to benefit from these programs. Most business management training programs designed specifically for refugee women, nonetheless, focused on this group. With the exception of a few projects combining small business training with home-based child care, virtually all the management programs focused on establishing businesses to market the Hmong women's distinctive handcrafts.

Several rationales were advanced for the training of refugee women in craft business management. Some program designers looked upon business training as an alternative to training for low-skilled, low-paid jobs in the secondary labor market. Others viewed the training of women in craft business management as a strategy to promote community development. Still others were concerned with the preservation of the traditional crafts of the highland women and with the provision of material benefits to the women who produced them.

A number of important issues surrounded the effort to train Hmong women in craft business management. The first was the low level of producers' earnings in most craft enterprises. It was obvious that if the women were paid by the hour they would earn far less than the minimum wage. A 1983 survey of twenty-eight craft shops across the country indicated that refugee women selling their handiwork in shops with paid staff earned an average of only $303 a year, while those who sold through enterprises with voluntary staff earned an even lower average of $117 a year (Fass 1986, 202-203).

Another issue concerned the degree to which the women producing the craft work and those trained in craft business management would be allowed to participate in management and ownership. Most training programs were connected with craft enterprises initiated by American women. Few of the Americans have yet agreed to turn over their enterprises to the highland women in spite of having stated their intentions to do so. Other enterprises were owned by male refugee leaders, who were also reluctant to relinquish ownership and management.

Nine craft business management training programs for refugee women were established in project study sites between 1975 and 1985. In the Northwest, two were initiated in Seattle, Washington, and one in Salem, Oregon. Another program was initiated in Berkeley, California. In the Midwest, a program for refugee women across Wisconsin offered training in Milwaukee, and two programs were developed in St. Paul, Minnesota. Two more training programs were developed in Washington D.C. One of these was a course offered for refugee women in the city and its suburbs, while a second program provided business training to women in four cities around the country, including three project sites: St. Paul, Minnesota; Santa Ana, California; and Seattle, Washington. Five of the nine business management programs received federal funding, and four received funding from private foundation grants.

Laotian Handcraft Center Training Program
Berkeley, California, 1982-

In the early 1980s several groups of refugee women from the highlands of Laos, who had settled in the San Francisco Bay area, began to ask American women to help them market their textiles. The various groups often sold their textiles at the same art shows and craft fairs, and eventually joined forces to establish the Laotian Handcraft Center in Berkeley. Funded by private foundation grants since 1982, the center has included a retail handcraft shop, a sewing workshop, and a vocational training program. About two hundred craftswomen have sold their handwork through the shop each year (Sneider 1985).

The goals of the center were both to preserve and promote the traditional handcrafts of the refugee women, and to provide employment training and placement services that would offer alternatives to sewing in the women's own homes or in local factory workrooms. To accomplish these goals the center established a training program that included instruction in machine sewing as a means of teaching English and basic mathematics. From this class, some women were selected to be trainees in the workshop, where about twenty women were employed to produce items for sale in the shop and to fill orders from other small businesses. Other women were selected from the training class to be instructed in craft business management. These women were employed by the center for sales, clerking, inventory of new items, end-of-the-month calculations of craftswomen's sales, writing checks to craftswomen, banking, and other tasks related to the day-to-day operation of the shop. Still others were placed in jobs in the community, including jobs as furniture refurbishers, weavers, and health workers (Laotian Handcraft Center 1984, 2, 18; Sneider 1985).

The Center focused on providing training for older refugee women between forty and sixty years of age, who were able to find few other training programs that would admit them. An average of thirty-six women attended the program each day in classes at three different levels. The program extended over a period of thirty weeks and included integrated sewing, English, and mathematics, as well as acculturation and housekeeping training, and paid on-the-job training for work as sales clerks in the center's retail store (Agard 1985; Sneider 1985; Laotian Handcraft Center 1984, 3-4).

During the first two years of the program, from 1982 to 1984, one hundred refugee women were trained; and by the end of 1985 nearly two hundred had completed the course. Most of the women served during the early years were Mien, Hmong, and Khmu, but by 1984 lowland Lao, who had made numerous requests to have their community included, were also admitted (Laotian Handcraft Center 1984, 3; Agard 1986a).

Refugee women who worked in management in the retail shop earned starting wages of $3.35 an hour but received periodic raises. Those who worked in the sewing workshop earned from $3 to $4 an hour, depending on the piece rate of the item. In 1983 most of the craftswomen who sold their handcrafts through the retail store earned less than $500 a year (Agard 1986b; Laotian Handcraft Center 1984, 25; Refugee Women in Development Project 1983).

When a class in integrated sewing, English, and mathematics was observed in February 1985, eleven women were working on measurements in sewing as a medium for learning both English and mathematics. The women appeared eager to learn the various fractions of an inch and were measuring cloth first with rulers and later with yardsticks. The atmosphere was relaxed and supportive, and as in many women's programs, those who knew English better than the others translated for women around them. A Mien woman of fifty-four, interviewed after the class, said she had never been to school before she arrived in California in 1980. Since then she had attended English language training at the Berkeley Adult School, but she had not been able to get a job. She enrolled in the class because her daughter had taken the class and told her about it and because she was still trying to find employment.

Hmong Craft Business Development Project
Santa Ana, Seattle, St. Paul, and Philadelphia, 1982-83

In early 1982 an ambitious project designed to promote the development of Hmong-owned business enterprises based on the women's traditional textile crafts was initiated by the Overseas Education Fund's Refugee Women's Project in Washington, D.C. The goal of the project was to promote Hmong economic development in four areas of concentrated Hmong settlement by training Hmong women and community leaders in the development and management of craft businesses, and by providing technical assistance to enterprises established in the community. The project budget totaled $128,000, of which $100,000 came from ORR funding. The remainder was provided by private foundation grants and other sources (Overseas Education Fund 1982).

In July 1982, training workshops were held at the four project sites in St. Paul, Santa Ana, Seattle, and Philadelphia. The project director in St. Paul opened her workshop with a presentation outlining the current economic situation of refugee women in the United States. She warned of the danger that women could get trapped in exploitative income-generating schemes and low-paid jobs. She also pointed to business management as an alternative for women with limited education. Informative background papers supported the presentation (Mason 1982).

While many of the concepts presented in English appeared to be only partly understood by the refugee women, small group discussions which followed the presentation provided opportunities for questions and further explanations; and undoubtedly some of the ideas began to take root.

Six months later, in January 1983, a five-day training conference for about twenty delegates from the four project sites was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This training focused on the concept of cooperative business development as a means of extending ownership and participation to women producing the crafts. In addition to attending working sessions on the cooperative concept, representatives from each site discussed the current craft marketing situation in their community and developed work plans for organizing Hmong-owned craft cooperatives (Vang, Sy 1985).

The cooperative concept was extremely difficult for many of the Hmong women and men participating in the conference to grasp. One Hmong participant reported that even the Americans in her delegation did not completely understand it. Moreover, for the Hmong the notion of organizing an enterprise that crossed clan lines was difficult to accept because of the importance of kinship in the establishment of trusting relationships. Another factor that presented problems for the Hmong at the conference was the large volume of written materials which most could read only with great difficulty (Vang, Sy 1985).

In the end, only the delegation from Seattle chose a cooperative structure for their handcraft enterprise, and this cooperative was dominated by women of one clan (Donnelly 1986). At other sites the delegates found that American women and Hmong community leaders who had already established shops did not want to give up control of them to join a cooperative. Moreover, local leaders were not enthusiastic about the cooperative form of enterprise (Vang, Sy 1985).

While these early efforts to train Hmong women in cooperative business management and handcrafts merchandising were not entirely successful, they raised the important question of whether it is possible to manage a craft enterprise without exploiting the producers. Although craft enterprises have been viewed by some as an alternative to work in the secondary labor market, it has been an alternative only for those who have become managers.

PART IV

CONCLUSION

Since the earliest years of Southeast Asian refugee resettlement in the United States, the central aim of federal refugee training policy has been to train refugees in short-term programs for low-skilled, low-paid jobs in the secondary market, as a means of reducing the number of refugee families on public assistance. This policy has largely failed--as indicated by the refugee unemployment data presented in the 1982 and 1983 studies discussed in part 1--because of the nature of the secondary sector of the economy, which comprises highly competitive, declining industries offering jobs that tend to be intermittent, seasonal, or part-time, with little opportunity for advancement. As a result refugees have been caught in a continuous cycle of moving from public assistance to unstable jobs and back again to public assistance.*

In early 1986 the Office of Refugee Resettlement proposed to Congress that drastic cuts be made in its own budget by eliminating Targeted Assistance Program (TAP) funding, sharply reducing social services funding (which has partially supported training programs), and imposing even more stringent restrictions on refugee training (ORR 1986). These proposals appear to reflect a culmination of ORR efforts to achieve its overriding policy goal of reducing resettlement costs by withdrawing supportive services such as employment training programs.

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*During a sixteen-month period in 1983 and 1984 in Minnesota, for example, 807 refugees were placed in 2,376 jobs (Kretzmann 1985).

While federal policy has seriously affected both refugee men and women, women have been far more adversely affected, both in terms of the number trained and the type of training provided. Because federal AFDC regulations mandated training or employment for the "primary wage earner" of families on public assistance--generally male in refugee families--in order to reduce the number on welfare, federally funded refugee training programs were designed largely to serve men. Consequently, a relatively small percentage of women have been trained. TAP 1, in which only one-third of the refugees trained were women, is a case in point. Even after the ORR-commissioned *Southeast Asian Refugee Self-Sufficiency Study* indicated that refugee families with more than one wage earner were most likely to achieve self-sufficiency, ORR made only a limited effort to provide more equitable training opportunities for women with the development of its Secondary Wage Earners Program.

While federal training policy has resulted in the channeling of both men and women refugees into the secondary labor market, within the secondary market itself sex-segregated occupations such as industrial sewing, housekeeping, and electronics assembly (which has only recently drawn male workers), have been among the lowest-paid, least stable occupations, and have afforded virtually no potential for advancement. Federally funded programs have trained women predominantly for these occupations, thus reinforcing the inequities of the labor market.

Two types of training programs were exceptional in that they provided equitable training for women, affording them the possibility of work in the primary sector. The first type was the preemployment training programs that provided English language training, basic instruction in mathematics, and cultural skills development in a supportive setting. The fourteen preemployment programs included in the present study enabled women with limited education--the most underserved group in the refugee community--to qualify for more advanced English language programs, employment training, or the job market.

The second type was the health care training programs. Originally initiated in response to requests from hospitals and clinics serving refugee patients, these programs became almost unique among federally funded training projects in providing training for refugee women to enter the primary labor market. It remains to be seen whether the experience gained in these pioneering programs will be used in developing similar training projects in the future.

Finally, while this study of employment training has focused on the achievement of stable employment and economic advancement, it has been evident from the data collected that training programs benefited refugee women in other ways. Many programs provided a supportive atmosphere that enabled refugee women to cope with difficult adjustment problems that accompanied their resettlement in the United States. Training programs also provided contacts with Americans and a setting conducive to development of the self-confidence necessary for survival in American society and entry into the work force.

APPENDIX A

PROGRAMS SURVEYED (69)

Women's Preemployment Training Programs (14)

1. Women's Cultural Skills Training Program*
   Portland, Oregon, 1977-82
   Sponsor: Indochinese Cultural and Service Center

2. YWCA Refugee Women's Program
   Salem, Oregon, 1979-81
   Sponsor: Salem YWCA

3. Indochinese Women's Program*
   Seattle, Washington, 1980-83
   Sponsor: Greater Seattle YMCA

4. Homebound English for Refugee Women
   Tacoma, Washington, 1981-82
   Sponsor: Tacoma Community House

5. Living Skills Training Program
   Orange County, California 1979-83
   Sponsor: Lao Family Community

6. Family Living in America*
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1977-85**
   Sponsor: St. Paul Public Schools

7. Women's Survival English Class
   Elgin, Illinois, 1982-83
   Sponsor: Elgin YWCA

8. Genesis Preparatory School for the Indochinese
   Providence, Rhode Island, 1982-85**
   Sponsor: Indochinese Advocacy Project

9. Hmong Women's Program
   Providence, Rhode Island, 1981-85**
   Sponsor: St. Michael's Church

10. Cambodian Women's Project*
    New York, New York, 1983-85**
    Sponsor: American Friends Service Committee

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* Case history included in study.

** Programs with end-dates of 1985 extended at least until that year, when research for the project was completed, but may have continued beyond that date.

11. Lao Family Community Homemaker Services
    Falls Church, Virginia, 1980-81
    Sponsor: Lao Family Community

12. Indochinese Women's Acculturation Project
    Washington, D.C., 1981-82
    Sponsor: Indochinese Community Center

13. Homebound Women's Project
    Washington, D.C., 1982-83
    Sponsor: Indochinese Community Center

14. Orientation for Refugee Women
    Arlington, Virginia, 1980-81
    Sponsor: Cambodian Women for Progress

Training Programs in the Needle Trades (13)

1. T.A. Handicraft Project
   Stockton, California, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Diocese of Stockton

2. Power Sewing and Apparel Arts for Refugee Women*
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1983-85**
   Sponsor: St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute

3. Project Regina
   Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1982-85
   Sponsor: Diocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis

4. Industrial Sewing Class
   Santa Ana, California, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Lao Family Community

5. Industrial Sewing, Alterations, and Tailoring for Refugee Women*
   Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1982-85
   Sponsor: Milwaukee Area Technical College

6. Industrial Sewing and Clothing Maintenance
   Cleveland, Wisconsin, 1983-85**
   Sponsor: Lakeside Technical Institute

7. Industrial Sewing
   Portland, Oregon, 1982-85**
   Sponsor: Indochinese Cultural and Service Center

8. Industrial Sewing for Hmong Women
   Marion, North Carolina, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Hmong Natural Association

9. Brown Group (Tempco) Industrial Sewing Training Project*
   Seattle, Washington, 1983-85**
   Sponsor: World Relief

10. Industrial Sewing Program
    Orange County, California, 1978-84
    Sponsor: Vietnamese Service Center

11. Warm Hands Home Knitting
    Tacoma, Washington, 1984-85**
    Sponsor: Pierce-Tacoma International Training and Careers

12. Alterations Program
    Arlington, Virginia, 1977-79
    Sponsor: Indochinese Cooperative Education Service

13. Apparel Arts Services
    Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1983-85**
    Sponsor: Minneapolis Technical Institute

Training Programs in Electronics (7)

1. Bilingual Training in Electronics Assembly*
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1983-85**
   Sponsor: St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute

2. Electronics Assembly Training
   Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1981-82
   Sponsor: Milwaukee Area Technical College

3. Electronics Assembly and Electronics Technician Training*
   Orange County, California, 1978-85**
   Sponsor: Vietnamese Service Center

4. Electronics Assembly
   Orange County, California, 1981-85**
   Sponsor: Lao Family Community

5. Electronics Assembly
   Portland, Oregon, 1982-85**
   Sponsor: Portland Community College

6. Electronics Assembly
   Renton, Washington, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Renton Community College

7. Electronics Assembly
   Arlington, Virginia, 1977-79
   Sponsor: Indochinese Cooperative Education Service

Training Programs in Housekeeping (12)

1. Bilingual Training in Housekeeping*
   Orange County, California, 1984-85
   Sponsor: United Cambodian Community

2. Regina Housekeeping Program
   Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1982-84
   Sponsor: Diocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul

3. Refugee Cleaning Training Program
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1982
   Sponsor: St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute

4. Housekeeping Training
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1983-84
   Sponsor: Project RISE

5. Housekeeping Program
   Portland, Oregon, 1982-85
   Sponsor: Indochinese Service and Cultural Center

6. Housekeeping Program
   Salem, Oregon, 1981-85
   Sponsor: Salem YWCA

7. Hotel and House Cleaning
   Arlington, Virginia, 1985
   Sponsor: Refugee Education and Employment Program

8. Motel Housekeeping
   Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1985
   Sponsor: Wisconsin Job Service and Jewish Vocational Services

9. Vocational Housekeeping for Refugee Women*
   Elgin, Illinois, 1981-85**
   Sponsor: Elgin YWCA

10. Housecleaning Program
    Cleveland, Wisconsin, 1982-85**
    Sponsor: Lakeside Technical Institute

11. Housekeeping Program
    Providence, Rhode Island, 1984
    Sponsor: Rhode Island Community College

12. Housecleaning Training and Placement Program
    Seattle, Washington, 1982-83
    Sponsor: Indochinese Women's Program

Child Care Training Programs (7)

1. Child Care Training Program
   Orange County, California, 1984
   Sponsor: Vietnamese Service Center

2. Child Care Training Program*
   Orange County, California, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Lao Family Community

3. In Home Child Care Training*
   Sheboygan, Wisconsin, 1983-84
   Sponsor: Lakeshore Technical Institute

4. Family Day Care Employment Training
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1982-84
   Sponsor: St. Paul Family Service

5. Home-based Child Care Training
   Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1984
   Sponsor: Wisconsin Resettlement Assistance Office

6. Occupational Child Care Program
   Arlington, Virginia, 1977-79
   Sponsor: Indochinese Cooperative Education Program

7. Home-based Child Care Training
   Arlington, Virginia, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Refugee Education and Employment Program

Health Care Training Programs (7)

1. Refugee Health Training Program*
   Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: University of Minnesota and American Refugee Committee

2. Community Health Advocate Training Program
   Seattle, Washington, 1983-84
   Sponsor: University of Washington, MEDEX

3. Refugee Licensed Vocational Nursing Project*
   Oakland, California, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Laney College

4. Nursing Aide Program
   Orange County, California, 1984-85
   Sponsor: Huntington Beach Adult School

5. Southeast Asian Health Training Program
   (Nursing & Allied Health Programs)
   Providence, Rhode Island, 1982-85**
   Sponsor: Community College of Rhode Island

6. Nursing Assistants Training Program*
   Providence, Rhode Island, 1983-84
   Sponsor: Community College of Rhode Island

7. Health Services Program
   Orange County, California, 1984-85**
   Sponsor: Santa Ana College

Business Management Training Programs (9)

1. Hmong Craft Business Development Project*
   St. Paul, Minnesota; Santa Ana, California;
   Seattle, Washington; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1982-83
   Sponsor: Overseas Education Fund

2. Refugee Marketing Project
   Salem, Oregon, 1981-84
   Sponsor: YWCA Refugee Program

3. Laotian Handcraft Center Training Program*
   Berkeley, California, 1982-85**
   Sponsor: Laotian Handcraft Center

4. Pa Ndau Development Program
   Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1984 (part of statewide program)
   Sponsor: Wisconsin Refugee Assistance Office

5. Southeast Asian Design Management Training Program
   Seattle, Washington, 1982-83
   Sponsor: American women's volunteer group (no name)

6. Hmong Women's Needlework Association
   (participation in Southeast Asian Design Management Training)
   Seattle, Washington, 1982-83
   Initially a splinter group within Southeast Asian Design and later an independent organization.

7. Small Business Development Training Program
   Washington, D.C., 1984
   Sponsor: Overseas Education Fund

8. Lao Family Community Pa Ndau Marketing Project
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1981-84
   Sponsor: Junior League of St. Paul and Lao Family Community

9. Hmong Enterprise
   St. Paul, Minnesota, 1982-85
   Sponsor: Lao Family Community

APPENDIX B

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED (92)

District of Columbia and Arlington, Virginia

Um Bo
Prieda Seic
Navon Kousoum
Suon Tuon
Sokhom Hak
Ahn Nguyen

Chicago and Elgin, Illinois

Khourn Nieng
Naly Nitsalandsy
Pann Sourn
Teng Sanvoravong
Deng Duang Brachanh
Phengphan Sanavongsay

Greensboro, North Carolina

Rem Ouk
Hong Thu Le

Marion and Morganton, North Carolina

Mai Kue
Lee Yang
Der Lo
Youa T. Moua

Milwaukee and Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Kang Vang
Mai Yia Xiong
Phoua Xiong
Ia Yang
Xia Yang
La Chang Vue
Mee Lo Yang
My Ly Cha
Mayva Yang
Xee Lee
Yer Lo
Yan Sous
Oeun Srey
Xia Vang Lee

New York, New York

Eng Huoy
Chan Muntha
Som Sambo

Oakland and Berkeley, California

Sorikane Bith
Nhung Tran
Madina Lek
Thanh Le
Thao Le
Kae Liem Saechao
Liew Choy
Onsee Keoprasert
Seng Seng

Orange County, California

Cong Minh
Ngocdiep T. Le
Minh Phuong Le
Anh Thieu
Ngoc My
Le Ngo
Xia Vang Lee
Ngoc Chau
Con Bui
Oeun Srey
Tammy Luu
Nhung Buy
Loc Chu

Portland and Salem, Oregon

Run Yep
Roeung Keo
Chheng Pin

Providence, Rhode Island

Vilayvong Phonpeseut
Molly Xiong
May Khang
May Kou Yang
Muoi Tan

Rockford, Illinois

Phuoc Cao
Kham Pheng

St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota

- Youa Yang
- Say Kang
- Sia Cha
- Mee Moua
- Ka Ying Xiong
- Yia Thao
- Xai Her
- Kang Her
- Mai Vang
- Mach Neang
- Phoua Thao
- Kim Tran
- Trien Nguyen
- Xia Lee
- Xuan Huong Nguyen

Seattle and Tacoma, Washington

- Ahn Nguyen
- Heur Vang
- Thany Oung
- Moua Chia
- Blia Xiong
- Farm Kouei Saechao
- Leng Tang
- Boua Chan

Spartanburg, South Carolina

- Ang Khum
- Phoung Lan Thi Trinh

APPENDIX C

ABBREVIATIONS

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
CETA	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act
ESL	English as a Second Language
GAO	U.S. General Accounting Office
HEW	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HLI	Highland Lao Initiative
ICSC	Indochinese Cultural and Service Center
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
LFC	Lao Family Community
LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse
LTI	Lakeshore Technical Institute
LVN	Licensed Vocational Nurse
MAA	Mutual assistance association
MATC	Milwaukee Area Technical College
MTI	Minneapolis Technical Institute
OJT	On-the-job training
ORR	Office of Refugee Resettlement
REAP	Refugee Employment Assistance Program
RHPPRP	Refugee Health Professional/Paraprofessional Retraining Program
TAP	Targeted Assistance Program
TVI	Technical Vocational Institute
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

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